

" Lieutenant Edmund Freeman, Fifth Infantry, reconnoitering with a small party in the Big Cypress Swamp, near Bowleg's Town, Florida, was attacked by the Seminoles March 5th, himself and three of his men severely wounded and one man killed. Captain Carter L. Stevenson, Fifth Infantry, with his command, called, by express, from Fort Keais, twenty miles distant, came rapidly to the relief of Lieutenant Freeman's party, attacked the enemy, and, after a gallant skirmish, put them to flight, with an evident loss to the Indians, the extent of which could not be ascertained, owing to the density of the hammock."

Since then nothing has been done in that quarter, and General Harney has been ordered to turn over his command to the next in rank, and proceed to take command of a large force of cavalry and infantry about to start on the plains—destination unknown. It is surmised that they may ultimately go to Salt Lake, as the Administration is endeavoring to prevail on some one to accept the appointment of Governor of that Territory, so as to supplant Brigham Young, who threatens resistance to the United States authority if removed. It seems that the Mormons, for several years past, have practically treated the laws of the United States as a nullity—obeying no law but that of the church. Recently they have made the lives of our judicial officers there, so insecure, that several of them have resigned, Judge Drummond among others. I see, in a letter from the latter gentleman, published in the papers, in answer to some inquiries of Mrs. Gunnison, that the Mormons, in his opinion, instigated and assisted in the murder of her husband, Lieutenant Gunnison, of the United States Topographical Engineers,

who was killed in or near Utah several years ago, the murder being supposed at the time to have been committed by the Indians.

The Mormons have, for several years, been applying to Congress for admission into the Union; but, as several very grave questions arise as to the propriety of admitting them with their present so-called religion, the subject has heretofore been evaded by Congress. According to the Constitution, we have no right to apply any religious test in the admission of a Territory; and, as polygamy is a part of their religion, it becomes a serious question how to dispose of the matter; for the civilized world, and the people of the United States especially, look upon this feature of Mormonism as decidedly immoral and degenerating. The question very naturally arises whether such a system as the Mormons profess can be viewed as a religion in the meaning of the Constitution. Our best interpreters of the law differ upon the subject. Hence the dilemma of Congress; and whilst the latter continues to stave off the question, the Executive is left in an embarrassing position in its dealings with this strange people. An open conflict with the United States authorities, it is feared, will result ere long.

June 15th, 1857. — On the requisition of Captain Augur, commanding Fort Hoskins, Company F, Fourth Infantry, was dispatched to the Siletz yesterday morning. It is reported that some of the Indians at that point are getting troublesome, and supposed to be on the eve of leaving the Reservation.

July 4th, 1837.—Lieutenant Philip H. Sheridan, of the Fourth Infantry, with a detachment of thirty-two men from H Company, Fourth Infantry, and D Company, Third Artillery, arrived here June 25th, and relieved Company C, First Dragoons, which, with its officers, Brevet Captain O. H. P. Taylor and Lieutenant James Wheeler, left for Fort Walla* Walla on the 29th ultimo. Lieutenant Sheridan and myself are now the only commissioned officers at this post. In honor of the day we fired a salute of thirty-one guns at 12 M., also a shell. The sergeant in charge was on the eve of putting the latter in the howitzer with the fuse reversed. The mistake was seen and corrected by Lieutenant Sheridan, otherwise an explosion of the howitzer might have been the result.

August 6th, 1857.—For the past three months I have been kept very much engaged in making professional visits through the neighborhood. The country north and east of the post is pretty thickly settled, and I have all the difficult cases to attend within thirty miles of this place. They never send for physicians in ordinary cases.

On the 23d ultimo I concluded to give myself a few days respite, and, accordingly, started for Fort Vancouver to participate in the wedding festivities gotten up to celebrate the marriage of Lieutenant William T. Welcker, of the Ordnance Department, to Miss Katy Adair, daughter of General Adair of Astoria. There were three parties given; one by the officers' mess in garrison; another on board the United States Steamship "Active," lying off Vancouver in the Columbia

River ; and the last and most brilliant of all, by Captain Rufus Ingalls, Assistant Quartermaster United States Army. The following are some of the most prominent persons present at the latter. Captain Prevost, and Secretary of the British Navy; Lieutenants Cuyler, Bassett, and Johnson, Dr. Brown, Major Davis, Chief Engineer, Mr. Jordan and Mr. Warren, Assistant Engineers, and Mr. West, Watch Officer, all officers of the "Active," a United States Naval Steamship, Captain Shaddock and Lieutenant Mason, of the United States Revenue Service, and Mr. Archibald Campbell, the Commissioner on the part of the United States to run the Northwest Boundary, and the following army officers:—Colonel Morris, Captain Smith, Captain Waller, Captain Augur, Major Alvord, Captain Ingalls; Drs. Potts, Herndon, and DeLengle ; Lieutenants Hodges, Myers, McFeely, Mendell, Mallory, Wickliffe, Wickler, and Hughes; and the following civilians:—Messrs. Grover, Green, Stark, Kibben, Rankin, Daniels, Noble, Brooke, etc. The ladies were mostly wives of army officers, though seven or eight unmarried ones were present, among others Miss Corbett, Miss Ellen Adair, and Miss Abernethy. The supper was bountiful and gotten up in splendid style. Everything passed off delightfully. It was given on the evening of the 30th ultimo.

On the following day I took passage on the "Active" for Portland, and started the same afternoon for this post, where I arrived the next day. Mechanics are at present engaged in finishing our quarters.

The Indians on this portion of the reservation give us very little trouble, except when drunk. Notwith-

standing the severity of the law, there are several vagabond white men in this vicinity who sell them liquor. They usually escape punishment on account of the difficulty of getting any one to testify against them. However, the law has one fellow in limbo, and it is to be hoped will make an example of him.

September 9th, 1857. — Weather continues delightfully pleasant, with cool, refreshing nights—splendid for sleeping. Fruit is much more abundant this year than last. Apples are now selling at from one dollar to six dollars per bushel; last year they brought from four to ten dollars. They have been ripe about a month. The farmers of Washington and Oregon Territories in consequence of the drought, have raised very light crops of grain and garden vegetables this year. The grain sowed last fall did well; but, as the preceding winter had been so severe as to kill much of the wheat, (there being no snow to protect it,) the majority of the farmers postponed sowing until spring, hoping that they would then have sufficient good weather for the purpose. The rainy season continued unusually long, however, and ceased so abruptly that the ground baked almost as hard as rock, rendering plowing impossible. Most of the grain produced this year is what is known in this country as "volunteer"—that is, such as springs up from the wastage of the preceding crop, without any cultivation whatever. Many of the farmers depend on their volunteer crops for two years in succession. But, notwithstanding the small quantity of grain produced this season, it is very low in price. This is owing to the dullness of the San Fran-

cisco market. The want of an available foreign market is one of the great drawbacks to Oregon farmers. High price of labor is the next most important. It is this last feature that renders many more advocates for slavery in this Territory than would otherwise be. Two or three years ago, one would have scarcely thought the question would ever be agitated; but now that the Territorial Convention is in session for the purpose of framing a State Constitution, the advocates for slavery are found to be quite numerous. They are, however, doubtless in the minority.

The news from the Atlantic States is not very interesting. Among the most noticeable is, that a large number of United States troops left Fort Leavenworth about the last of July, *en route* for Utah. Several battalions had started a few weeks previous for the same destination, making in all about one thousand three hundred men. A body of dragoons, intended for the expedition, is detained, for a short time, in Kansas, owing to a renewal of the excitement there between the slavery and anti-slavery party. The expedition is to be under the command of Brevet Brigadier-General W. S. Harney, so soon as he can be relieved from his Kansas duties, and joins it; and, on their arrival, they will be considered in a new department, called the Department of Utah.

The object of sending so many troops into Utah, is to enforce the United States laws, the Mormons having heretofore proved very refractory. Their great head, Young, is to be supplanted as Governor, by Colonel Cummings, who, with many other civil officers recently appointed for Utah Territory, is accompanying the

expedition, Brigham Young has heretofore refused to be superseded, and has threatened resistance to the entrance of any more United States troops into his Territory. It now remains to be seen what he will do under the circumstances. Should he urge the Mormons into a general resistance, it will require a great many troops to put them down. They are now quite numerous, and have several thousand well disciplined soldiery, who, prompted by religious fanaticism and imaginary persecution, will fight desperately. They will hardly be so insane, however, as to come to an open rupture with the United States.

October 1st, 1857.—The following is a synopsis of the weather during the past year at Fort Yamhill, Oregon Territory:

1856 AND 1857.	Highest temperature.	Lowest temperature.	Average temperature.	Number of days Fair.	Number of days Cloudy.	Number of days Rain.	Number of days Snow.	Quantity of Rain — Inches.
1856.								
October.....	72°	29°	40.7°	8.66	22.33	17	0	6.38
November.....	60°	27°	43.67°	9.33	20.66	13	2	6.63
December.....	53°	30°	38.88°	2	29	23	6	14.80
1857.								
January.....	57°	9°	38.79°	4.66	26.33	20	5	11.86
February.....	56°	33°	41.83°	2.33	25.66	17	4	9.03
March.....	63°	34°	47.42°	10.66	20.33	23	3	8.52
April.....	81°	35	55.48°	27	3	2	0	.10
May.....	91°	40°	57.27°	21	10	13	0	1.76
June. ...	92°	45°	57.85°	20.66	9.33	10	0	1.28
July.....	95°	50°	61.72°	24.66	6.33	1	0	.05
August.....	91°	44°	60.05°	27.66	3.33	1	0	.10
September.....	87°	42°	57.22°	19	11	11	0	1.68
				177.62	187.30	151	20	62.19

CHAPTER XXVIII.

FORT YAMHILL—VISIT TO FORT VANCOUVER.

Loss of the Steamer "Central America"—Financial Crisis—Trouble among the Reservation Indians—Utah Expedition—An Expressman Drowned—Brigham Young more Conciliatory—Indians Moody; Chief John and Son Shackled and sent to Presidio, near San Francisco—Frazer River Mining Excitement—Rumored Fight with the Indians by the Troops under Colonel Steptoe.

October 30th, 1837.—After a tiresome professional ride through rain and mud, I am now enjoying my *otium cum dignitate* in a comfortable room before a cheerful fire, and can with feelings of perfect security listen to the howling blast and pelting rain, announcing the commencement of the rainy season. When the breeze is fresh here it usually blows a gale at sea. The Pacific is a rough and dangerous coast at this season of the year, at least that portion lying between San Francisco and Vancouver's Island. But owing to there being so few vessels on these waters it is not often we hear of any great catastrophes occurring in this part of the great watery domain. Oh, how different on the Atlantic! Almost every States' mail brings some heartrending account of disasters at sea. By the last mail comes the melancholy intelligence of the total loss of the Steamship "Central America" (late "George Law"), with over four hundred passengers, the California mail of the 20th of August, and about sixteen hundred thousand dollars in specie. She foundered at sea in a tremendous hurricane, on the 12th of September, off

Cape Hatteras. Not precisely known how many passengers were saved—one hundred were transferred to the brig "Mariner" of Boston, including all the women (twenty-six) and children, and fifty others were picked up by the Norwegian bark "Helen," after the vessel had sunk. Two of these, Messrs. R. T. Brown and John D. Derment (the latter from Oregon), had been in the water twelve hours, floating on a piece of the hurricane deck, with cork life-preservers to their persons. The Captain (Lieutenant Herndon, United States Navy) was among the lost.

There seems to be a great financial crisis taking place in the States. The ball was set in motion some two months ago by the failure of the New York branch of the Ohio Trust Company's Banking Association, and has been rolling with accelerated motion ever since. Railroad stock was the first to suffer—its depression at present being incredible. Next the banks and merchants in regular succession. The money panic is of greater severity than has occurred for many years, and alarming mercantile disasters are constantly occurring throughout the Union, but mainly in New York city.

There has lately been a little excitement among the Indians on the Coast Reservation, growing out of the killing of two Siletz Indians by Cultus Jim, of Old John's band. There being much sickness among the latter tribe, they superstitiously believed that these two men, who were medicine men or doctors, were causing it by their witchcraft. Cultus Jim accordingly waylaid and killed them—or, at least, killed one and wounded the other. A row being the consequence, the Indian

Agent, Bob Metcalf, requested all the Indians who had fire-arms to surrender them. Old John's band at first refused to comply, but subsequently promised to obey. A reinforcement of thirty troops having in the meantime arrived from Fort Hoskins, making, with those previously at the Siletz, fifty men, under the command of Lieutenant H. H. Garber. About the time that half the arms were given up by Old John, the murderer, Cultus Jim (the Chief's son), was found by the Agent, who, in company with Lieutenant Garber and a sergeant, attempted his arrest. Jim resisting and firing a pistol at Metcalf, was instantly shot by the latter and Lieutenant Garber. John subsequently threatened an attack on the troops, but things in that section seem quiet at present.

November 30th, 1857.—Our mail from the States arrived last night. The financial crisis is increasing. Nearly every bank in the Union has suspended specie payment. Corporations, merchants, etc., breaking by hundreds.

The October election in Kansas for member of the State Legislature passed off quietly. Results not yet known. United States troops were placed at all the points where riots had been apprehended between the contending parties.

The Utah Expedition continues to engross public attention. It is not yet known whether Brigham Young will offer open resistance to it or not. The leading California papers have come to the conclusion that a conflict is inevitable, as the latest accounts from Salt Lake represent the Mormons as very much ex-

cited, and preparing to resist the entrance of troops into the Territory. The advanced body of troops, seventeen hundred strong, under Colonel Albert S. Johnston, was within two days' march of Utah. Captain S. Van Vleit, Assistant Quartermaster United States Army, had been sent to Salt Lake City in advance, to ascertain from the Mormons the practicability of obtaining supplies for the troops. And it is rumored that although treated kindly, Brigham Young declined giving him any answer, but, on the contrary, delivered several belligerent sermons in his presence. I cannot believe them so fanatical as to bring on a rupture with the General Government. But *nous verrons*. There is little doubt, however, but they have been for some time instigating the neighboring Indians to acts of depredation and murder on California immigrants.

December 15th, 1857.—To-day the mortal remains of Corporal Boland, G Company, Fourth Infantry, were brought to garrison. He was drowned on the 15th instant, while attempting to swim across Mill Creek. He was carrying the mail at the time from Portland, *via* this post, to Fort Hoskins. The mule, after floating down the stream a considerable distance, found its way out, and the "mail" was recovered.

December 26th, 1857.—A general court-martial convened at this post on the 24th, and adjourned on the 25th instant. The members present were: Captain D. A. Russell, Fourth Infantry, Lieutenant Henry C. Hodges, Fourth Infantry, Lieutenant Philip H. Sheridan, Fourth Infantry, Lieutenant Nathaniel Wickliffe,

Ninth Infantry, Lieutenant Wm. T. Gentry, Fourth Infantry, and Wm. B. Hughes, Ninth Infantry. Captain David R. Jones, Assistant Adjutant-General, was Judge Advocate.

Lieutenants Hodges and Gentry left for Fort Hoskins yesterday morning, and the other gentlemen, except Sheridan, started for the same post this morning, where another court-martial is to be held—they having tarried a day to take a Christmas dinner with us. Our Christmas, by the by, went off quietly. We had the usual *sine qua non* for dinner—a fat turkey—which is a great rarity in this Territory. From the general mildness of the climate, one would suppose wild birds of this species to be abundant on this coast, but it is credibly asserted that there is not one on this side of the Rocky Mountains. Perhaps the varmints have exterminated them by destroying their eggs. The polecat, or skunk, is the most mischievous in this line; this country is overrun with them. Since the underpinning of our quarters, they have discovered that the latter affords a most pleasant and safe retreat from the rain and snow, and have, accordingly, made some very snug little subterranean passages beneath the foundation walls. They seem to take it for granted that we admire the fashionable perfume, musk, and have charitably determined to give us a benefit. I have returned the compliment by preparing for them, every night, a nice little piece of meat in a box trap, and when one is enticed into this snug little place, he is kindly conveyed some two hundred yards from the quarters, and a dose of lead gently administered from a double-barrelled shot-gun, thus demonstrating to

them the falsity of the philosophical dogma, that matter is impenetrable. I have composed, in this manner, some sixteen of them, and believe that we shall, in the future, have a little rest.

It seems from the official reports of Colonel Albert S. Johnson and Colonel Alexander, that the Mormons captured and burnt three supply trains belonging to the Utah expedition, consisting in all of seventy-five wagons.

"On the morning of the 5th of October the Mormons burned two trains of Government stores on Green River and on the Big Sandy, and a few wagons belonging to Mr. Perry, Sutler of the Tenth Infantry, which were a few miles behind the latter train."—Extract from Colonel E. B. Alexander's Report to the Adjutant General, dated Camp Winfield, Utah Territory, October 9th, 1857.

This occurred on Green River, some ninety miles to the rear of the vanguard of the army under Colonel Alexander. There was no escort with these trains at the time. No one was killed—the teamsters being permitted to retain four wagons and sufficient provisions to last them to Fort Laramie, where they were ordered by the Mormons to return. At the time of this occurrence, Colonel E. B. Alexander, of the Tenth Infantry, with the advance, was at Hanes' Fork, off Green River, awaiting the arrival of the commander of the expedition, Colonel Albert S. Johnson, of the Second Cavalry. From his official letter to the Adjutant General, dated Camp Winfield, Utah Territory, October 9th, 1857, it appears that Brigham Young had directed him to return forthwith from the Territory,

and had sent him his proclamation forbidding the entrance of armed forces into the same, and had, at the same time, informed him, that if the United States troops would surrender their arms and ammunition they might remain where they were for the winter, but should return to the States in the spring. The Colonel acknowledged the receipt of the Governor's letter, and informed him that the United States forces were there by instructions from the President of the United States, and that he was awaiting the arrival of the commander of the expedition, whose orders would be obeyed. He reports that he will be able to resist any attack from the Mormons, and might, perhaps, be strong enough to act on the offensive when the troops should have all come up, and that his provisions would last about six months. Colonel Johnson was met by the expressman who brought Colonel A.'s letter two hundred miles west of Fort Laramie on his way to overtake the latter.

One of the most ridiculous reports that has tended to excite the Mormons to their present state of rebellion, was that all the soldiers to be sent among them were to draw double rations in order to enable them to support a wife, who was to be seduced from the Mormons. This rumor was founded upon the fact that Harney was ordered to establish in Utah two or three double-ration posts—that is, posts where the commanding officer would be entitled to double rations. These extra rations are allowed commanding officers upon the presumption that they do most of the entertaining. A great mistake, by the by, for this is generally done by the bachelor mess.

January 14th, 1858.—Our little coterie consists at present of Captain D. A. Russell, Lieutenant P. H. Sheridan, Fourth Infantry; Messrs. Ingalls and Foster, the Sutlers; Mr. W. Holley, Acting-Assistant-Quartermaster's Clerk, and myself. We get along smoothly and pleasantly together. Our new quarters are plainly but handsomely finished, and we have taken pains to furnish them accordingly. Could our Eastern friends drop in upon us for awhile, they might be surprised at the air of comfort surrounding us. If we could always have pleasant houses like these for winter quarters, we would cheerfully campaign during the entire summer—But, oh, how checkered is army life! At this very time our military friends of the Mormon expedition are perhaps barely sheltered under canvas tents on the snow-covered plains of Utah, surrounded by enemies many times their number, who are urged on to deeds of treason, violence and blood against their race and countrymen, by the most sensual and revolting species of superstitious fanaticism that has blinded humanity since the wars of Mahomet. We are daily expecting orders to proceed thither—*i.e.*, the majority of us. Were we all to leave, another Oregon war would soon be engendered between the restless whites and dissatisfied Indians. It is not possible or necessary to send a military force from here this winter. It would perish in the mountain snows. But it can be concentrated and fully equipped to make an early start in the spring. Similar expeditions will probably be dispatched from California and the western frontier about the same time.

January 29th, 1858—The news from the Utah Expedition, *via* the Atlantic States, is up to November 1st, and not very definite. It seems that four or five Mormons had been captured and one or two killed. They, with others, had been following in the rear of the army, stealing cattle. By the way of California, however, we have news from Salt Lake up to December 13th, 1857. The whole force under Colonel Johnston had arrived in the Territory of Utah and were posted at Fort Bridger, and other points in its vicinity. The Mormons, on abandoning, set fire to the fort; also burnt up all the grass in the neighborhood. They had stolen some twelve hundred cattle from the troops. The latter had retaliated by capturing a larger number from the Mormons. Governor Cummings issued his proclamation from Fort Bridger. It is rumored that Brigham Young had remarked in the Tabernacle that he was willing to admit Cummings, but not the troops.

April 29th, 1858.—On last Monday week, I took a trip to Portland, and also made a flying visit to Vancouver. The latter is as beautiful as ever. Of course, I mean the fort. The town is a miserable dirty village, full of liquor shops and discharged soldiers. Portland presents a very neat, flourishing appearance, and bids fair to become a large commercial city. At the latter place I succeeded in purchasing a splendid saddle and buggy horse, known all over the Territory. He is, beyond doubt, the finest saddle animal in Oregon. I got him for three hundred dollars; his value until lately has been five hundred dollars.

On Friday, Captain Russell and myself started for

home, where we arrived the following day at 4 P. M.—distance, sixty miles. We could have come through in a day had we been in a hurry.

There has been considerable excitement among the Indians on this reservation within the last fortnight. Old Sam's band of Rogue River's threatened to leave the reservation, and return to their old homes in Southern Oregon. The Rouge River's at the Siletz, and the Coast Indians, from the neighborhood of Port Orford, also declared their determination to go back. The celebrated chief, John, seemed to be the prime mover in the ferment at the Siletz. Himself and son were arrested about eight days ago, shackled, and taken to Fort Vancouver. The immediate cause of his arrest is said to be a threat to take Agent Metcalf's life. The Agent's brother, who is living with him, was wounded not long since by an Indian.

The Indians east of the Cascades are also becoming troublesome again. Nine head of cattle, belonging to a Mr. Davis, living in the vicinity of Fort Walla Walla, and thirteen head of the United States Commissioner's, at the latter place, were run off by the Palouse Indians on the 13th of April. A detachment of troops were sent in pursuit, but the Indians refused to give up the cattle. A row may be the consequence. It is also reported that two white men, on their way to the Colville mines, were killed by the Indians, not very far from Fort Walla Walla, a few weeks since.

The Willamette Valley now presents a beautiful appearance. Large crops of oats and wheat have been put in this season by the farmers, but, as is usual in this country, the harvest will probably be an expensive one,

in consequence of so many persons leaving the Territory for the newly discovered mines on Fraser and Thompson's Rivers in the British possessions. A mining excitement springs up ever Summer and causes nearly all the laborers and mechanics to quit their ordinary duties, which pay them surely and well, for an uncertain livelihood in the mines.

May 27th, 1858.—We have received two Eastern mails since my last remarks—one on the 12th, the other on the 25th instant

Congress is still harping on the subject of "bleeding Kansas," to the detriment of a vast deal of important unfinished business. It has only passed a few bills ; one is for the raising of three regiments of volunteers—two for the suppression of the Mormon rebellion, the other to guard the frontier of Texas.

No late reliable news from Utah. In alluding to the Mormon difficulties, I should have added that the United States Utah forces are being reinforced by troops sent *via* Fort Leavenworth. Some started in the latter part of March—others were to go in April and the present month. General Persifer F. Smith, General William S. Harney, and Colonel E. V. Sumner, have been ordered to join the Utah Army.

The Civil Commissioners have been sent thither to hold counsel with Brigham Young, and prevent, if possible, bloodshed. They are Ex-Governor Powell, of Kentucky, and Major Ben. McCullough, of Texas.

Under date of April 29th, I mentioned the rumor of two men having been massacred near Fort Colville, in Washington Territory, and of some animals having

been stolen from Fort Walla Walla by the Indians. It has since been contradicted that any men were killed, but there is no doubt as to the stealing of the cattle. The commanding officer of Fort Walla Walla, Colonel Steptoe, shortly after the stealing of the cattle by the Indians, started out into the Indian country with three companies of Dragoons, and a detachment of twenty-five Infantry. Our expressman brings a letter from an officer at Fort Vancouver stating that information has just been received, *via* express, from Fort Walla Walla, that Colonel Steptoe had had a fight with the Indians, and been defeated—losing one-half of his command, all his provisions, most of his guns, and all the horses but fifty. The news was brought to Fort Walla Walla by Indians, and was believed there, although not confirmed by any information from Colonel Steptoe or his officers. If there be any truth in the matter, it will be confirmed in a few days.

CHAPTER XXIX.

FORT YAMHILL—FINANCIAL RUIN.

Steptoe's Defeat—Chief John and Son Raise a Row on Board Ship and Get Wounded—Thirty Thousand Persons gone to Fraser River Mines—A Party of Ninety Miners under Robertson driven back by the Indians East of the Cascade Mountains—Financially Ruined—The Mormon Troubles Ended—A Campaign to be made against Confederate Indians in Eastern Washington and Oregon—Rumored Fight with the Indians by the Troops under Colonel Wright.

June 4th, 1858.—The rumor alluded to above in relation to a fight between the United States troops and Indians is partly correct. The facts are these: On the 6th ultimo, Colonel E. J. Steptoe, Ninth Infantry, started from Fort Walla Walla, in Washington Territory, for an old Hudson Bay trading post, Fort Colville, with portions of C, E, and H Companies, First Dragoons, and a detachment of twenty-five men of the Ninth Infantry, and the following officers: Captain C. S. Winder, and H. B. Fleming, Ninth Infantry, Captain O. H. P. Taylor, and Lieutenants D. McM. Gregg, James Wheeler and William Gaston, First Dragoons—in all, one hundred and fifty, besides the packers. The object of the expedition is not precisely known, but seems to have been more to give the troops some experience in campaigning than anything else. It is certain, however, that they had no idea that there would be any resistance offered them.

On leaving camp, on the morning of the 16th, they were told that the Spokanes had assembled and were

ready to fight. Not believing this report, the march was continued until about eleven o'clock, when they found themselves in the presence of six hundred warriors in war costume. The command halted to have a talk. The Spokanes said they heard the troops had come out to wipe them out, and that they were ready to fight, and the troops should not cross the Spokane River. The Indians were well mounted, principally armed with rifles, and flanked the troops at a distance of one hundred yards. After some talk, Colonel Steptoe told his officers they would have to fight, but to let the Spokanes fire the first gun. The troops marched a mile, had another talk; no result except the most insulting demonstrations from the Indians. The troops were kept in the saddle three hours ready for an attack. The Indians dispersed at sunset.

On the morning of the 17th, the command started for the Palouse, marching in the following order: H Company in advance, C in the centre, with the packs, and E in the rear. About 8 A. M., Indians appeared in great numbers to the rear of the column, and just as the advance crossed a small stream, commenced firing. In twenty minutes the firing became continuous. Towards evening the troops' ammunition began to give out. Abandoning everything, they mounted their horses and left the hill at 9 P. M., and after a ride of ninety miles, mostly in a gallop, and without a rest, reached Red Wolf's crossing on Sucker River the next evening and were met by their friends, the Nez Perces. They had two officers, five men, and three friendly Indians killed, and ten men wounded—Sergeant Ball, of H Company, missing. The officers killed were

Brevet-Captain O. H. P. Taylor, and Lieutenant Gaston, First Dragoons. The former was shot through the neck ; the latter through the body. Thirty horses killed in action ; none captured by the Indians. The two howitzers were abandoned with other things. Number of Indians killed not known; Lieutenant Gregg could count fifteen, and says the Indians acknowledged to have had forty wounded.

Captain Taylor was formerly stationed at this post, Fort Yamhill, whence he was ordered to Walla Walla about a year since. Shortly thereafter he went to the States, and returned this last Spring with his wife and two children. They had not got comfortably fixed at Fort Walla Walla ere he was ordered out on the above expedition. He was an accomplished gentleman and a gallant officer. An intimate and dear friend of mine. How sad his fate, and the bereavement of his widowed wife and orphaned children.

June 13th, 1858.—Sergeant Ball, alluded to above as missing, found his way into Fort Walla Walla some five or six days after the command returned. He was several days without food. It is now reliably reported that during the retreat of the troops, two men were left behind on account of their horses failing—Sergeant Williams (wounded) and a private soldier. They fell into the hands of the Indians, who told them to swim Snake River for their lives. They accordingly jumped in and made for the opposite shore, here some five hundred yards distant, the Indians in the meantime shooting at them. The private soldier reached the opposite shore and Fort Walla Walla in safety; the Sergeant was supposed to have been shot in the water.

June 29, 1858.—The steamship "Pacific" arrived at Portland on the 19th instant, bringing three companies of artillery. The mail steamer reached there a few days afterwards with one more company, and the Commander of this Department, Brevet Brigadier-General Newman S. Clarke, together with his staff. Companies I and K, Third Artillery, and D, Fourth Infantry, are ordered to come up on the next steamer. E Company, Fourth Infantry, is ordered up from Fort Jones by land. The four companies of artillery already arrived are A, B, D, and M. The General's Aide-de-Camp, Lieutenant Henry H. Walker, Sixth Infantry, arrived here last Friday, and left for Fort Hoskins on Sunday—thence will return to Fort Vancouver. The object of his visit seems to be to ascertain whether any troops can be spared from either of these two posts, to join the expedition now being organized to proceed against the hostile Indians in the North. There is only one company at each of the three posts which guard the reservation—viz: at Fort Yamhill, Hoskins, and Umpqua.

Mr. W. informs us that Old John, the celebrated Rogue River chief, and son got into a row on their passage to California, in the steamer before the last. It seems that the Sergeant in charge had occasion to take them to the lower deck, when they grappled him and succeeded in securing his pistol, with which they commenced firing, both at the Sergeant and the persons who attempted to come to his rescue, whereupon one of the officers shot Old John through the nose and his son in the leg, which had to be amputated on his reaching San Francisco. It is thought that Old John

and son supposed they were being taken to the lower deck to be hung—hence their conduct. It is a very unfortunate affair, and will greatly impair the confidence of the Indians in the Whites.

The Fraser River mines excitement increases. Thousands of persons are going thither from California, and hundreds from Oregon.

July 17th, 1858.—The farmers in this vicinity commenced harvesting about eight days ago, and have already cut the most of the grain sown last fall. That put in this spring is not yet mature. The crops are unusually heavy. In consequence of the late rains, and unreasonably cool weather, there is considerable smut in the wheat. The harvest is hurried through, in order that the people may go to the mines on Frazer and Thompson's Rivers, in the southern part of the British possessions. The excitement about the mines is extraordinary. It is estimated that between twenty-five and thirty thousand persons have already started thither from California, nearly all of whom are at different points in the vicinity of the mouth of Frazer River, seeking a good trail to cross the Cascade Range of mountains. Very few had, at last accounts, reached the mines; and, as speculators, particularly the steamship companies, have great interest in keeping up the excitement, it is feared the richness of the mines is overrated, and that thousands of persons have left much better mining claims in California than they will get in the north. If the reports of abundance of gold are confirmed, it will be a snug thing for that section of country, and also for our adjoining Territory,

Washington. The most intense excitement prevails about which is the best route to the gold region. Some contend for that up the Columbia River and by way of the Dalles; others say that a much shorter, and in other respects, equally as good a trail, can be found across the Cascade Range at Bellingham Bay. Oregonians, of course, go in for the former; but the present Indian hostilities on that route have hitherto prevented many from attempting to go that way. A party of about ninety men, under Captain Robertson, started from the Dalles some six weeks ago for the mines by that route, but were driven back by the Indians, with a loss of two men killed, several drowned and wounded, and all their pack animals, provisions, etc. Larger parties have since gone out with stock, and others are preparing to depart, through the same section of country. Our old friend, the ex-Superintendent of Indian Affairs, General Palmer, is one of the number. If the mines are no failure, a flourishing town must be built on this coast, in close proximity to the golden region. The great question is, where it shall be. The little town of Victoria on Vancouver's Island, in the British possessions, is at present the center of attraction. Town lots, which were not worth ten dollars previous to the excitement, are now renting there for one hundred and twenty-five dollars per month. Real estate in San Francisco, Sacramento, and throughout California is rapidly decreasing in value, in consequence of the vast drain upon the population. Flour, beef, and other provisions are rising rapidly in price in Oregon and Washington Territories. Speculators are hurrying all over the country, buying up all they can get at double what they were worth a few weeks ago.

The troops expected by the last steamer arrived at Fort Vancouver. Captain H. M. Judah's company from Fort Jones, which came up by land, will also get there to-day. Two columns are to proceed against the hostile Indians—one battalion of nine companies, being four of the First Dragoons, four of the Third Artillery, and one of the Ninth Infantry, under Colonel George Wright, is to start from Fort Walla Walla; and another of five companies, that is, three of the Ninth and two of the Fourth Infantry, under Major Robert S. Garnett, from Fort Simcoe. They expect to get off by the first of August.

There is really no news at this post of importance. A general court-martial was convened here on the 15th and adjourned on the 16th instant, of which I was Judge Advocate. The members were: Captain David A. Russell, Lieutenant Henry C. Hodges, Fourth Infantry, Lieutenant Joshua W. Sill, Ordnance Department, Lieutenant Phillip H. Sheridan, and Lieutenant William T. Gentry, Fourth Infantry. Only three cases tried—two of which were for desertion.

FORT YAMHILL, O. T., August 4th, 1858.

I am now financially a ruined man. All my savings have been lost by the carelessness of an agent. Having good health and a large though laborious private practice in the vicinity of this post, I shall work harder than ever to secure a few thousand dollars to give me a start in civil life. This can be accomplished in a year or two—then good-bye to the army, frontier isolation, and further dependence on unreliable agents. If I were now to resign, which I am half inclined to do, my practice

in the Willamette Valley would soon make up my losses; but city practice, although slower in the beginning, affords a better chance for distinction in the long run—so I shall strike for that or nothing.

As my financial troubles alluded to above are analogous to those of army officers generally, who are under the necessity of employing agents to preserve their small savings, I shall give a general statement of the same:—

On coming to this coast I left a portion of my means loaned out on interest, and secured by bond and mortgage upon real estate in New York. Bringing the remainder with me, and placing it in San Francisco with an agent, who, from having once been an esteemed officer of the Army, of good financial ability, had the entire confidence of every military man in California.

This gentleman having explained to me the various methods he had under his control for investing the funds of his clients, I chose that of security by bond and mortgage upon real estate, as the safest, although yielding the smallest interest. From time to time I added a little to the amount left in his possession.

After a short service in Oregon, I learned that my agent had ceased to carry on a legitimate banking business, though this was paying him well, and had embarked pretty extensively in buying and selling of mining stock. Fully appreciating the hazardous character of mining stock speculation, I made some inquiries as to whether my money was really invested as requested, and was annoyed to find that it was not. After a tedious correspondence on the subject I succeeded in having it placed out on mortgage, as directed.

In January of last year, a friend returned from Portland with the news of my agents' failure, and added that nearly every Army officer on the Pacific Coast had thereby been plunged in penury. Seeing the necessity of preventing the note owing to me, and then nearly due, from being paid into the hands of my agent, I hastily drew up a revocation of my power of attorney to him, and appointed a new attorney. I had the new instrument executed before a neighboring Justice of the Peace. But it being essential to secure a certificate from the County Clerk, to the effect that the officer before whom the letter of attorney was executed was really a Justice of the Peace, I rode twenty-five miles through one of the deepest snows that had ever fallen in Oregon, to Dalles, the County Seat. On arriving there the office was closed. I then continued a few miles further to the residence of a lawyer, who, unfortunately, told me that in order to make my paper legal I must go eight miles further to Salem, and get the power of attorney executed before a notary public. Contrary to my own judgment I followed his advice. This extra trip took up so much of my time that on returning to the Fort I found the expressman had already departed for Portland with the mail, thus causing a detention of a fortnight more before my document could possibly go down on the steamer. On the next trip of the latter she was detained ten days by ice in the Columbia River. To add still further to my troubles, my power of attorney was returned from San Francisco, to be certified to by the County Clerk, as I had at first intended.

However, the instrument ultimately reached its des-

tion just in time, and my funds were forwarded to my agent in New York, who was directed to invest them, together with the amount left under his supervision on my departure for the Pacific Coast, in suburban real estate in Chicago. Instead of following my instructions, he has kept the money in his own hands, and is now about to fail, leaving me the alternative of total loss, or taking worthless western lands.

August 17th, 1858.—Major B. Alvord, his brother, Mr. Vansycle, Wells, Fargo & Co.'s Express Agent at Portland, Oregon Territory, and son, arrived here on the 15th instant, and left for Fort Hoskins this morning.

The troops were paid for four months. They are entitled to their pay every two months, but the Paymaster rarely gets around so often.

We learn that the mail steamer did not reach Portland on the last trip until the 12th instant. She was detained by fogs, and by going in search of the steamship "Oregon," which ran on the rocks at Point Reyes on her last downward trip from Victoria to San Francisco. The accident is attributed to a variation in the compass—the Captain supposing he was running clear of the point some six miles, whereas he ran directly on it. There was a very dense fog at the time. As the vessel struck, many of the passengers sprang ashore, and some few are supposed to have been drowned in the effort to get on land. The engine was reversed immediately, and the steamer got to sea. She reached San Francisco in safety. The injury caused a considerable leak, but the holes were stopped with cloths,

and the vessel easily kept free from water by bailing. Captain Patterson was in command.

It is now positively ascertained that there will be no war with the Mormons. The Peace Commissioners, sent to Utah by the President, arrived there about the 7th of July, and had a conference with Brigham Young and the leading Mormons, who have agreed to yield implicit obedience to the laws of the United States; in fact Brigham Young had, about a month previously, given up the seal of the Territory to his successor, Governor Cummings. Both the Governor and Commissioners went from Camp Scott to Salt Lake City unaccompanied by the army. The latter, under Brevet Brigadier-General Johnston, had, in the meantime, been reinforced to three thousand men, and replenished with supplies, and all the necessary equipments for a vigorous campaign, in case the Mormons proved obdurate. Some two thousand more regular troops were also *en route* from the States. Also, Brigadier-General Harney, (promoted last spring,) who was to assume chief command—General Persifer F. Smith having died at Fort Leavenworth shortly after being ordered to Utah. In the early part of the Spring the Mormons commenced an exodus to the southern part of the Territory, with the view, as was conjectured, of seeking a new home somewhere in Mexico. They were, at last accounts, returning to their homes.

The army had not, at last dates, approached nearer the city of Salt Lake than Camp Scott. Many of the troops ordered thither have, since the first report of Governor Cummings that Young had turned over the Territorial Seal, been ordered to other points on the

western frontier. One regiment of Infantry, either the Sixth or Seventh, has been ordered to Fort Walla Walla, on this coast, to aid in quelling Indian disturbances. In the meantime the Commandant of the Department has dispatched all the available troops on this coast to that section—the main body consisting of about one hundred and ninety dragoons, four hundred artillery, and ninety infantry—total, six hundred and eighty, with about two hundred camp followers, packers, wagoners, etc., or about nine companies, were to leave Walla Walla on the 15th instant; and the other column, of about five companies, under Major R. S. Garnett, were to start from Fort Simcoe about the 9th instant. The Indians, in the meantime, have been making great preparations for war, and state that they will not be subdued.

They have lately driven back several parties of miners on their way to Frazer River. Larger parties have since gone out through the same section, well armed and prepared to fight their way to the mines. The largest party, numbering over two hundred men, commanded by a Major Robertson, has gone out, *via* the Dalles and Fort Simcoe. Another party under General Joel Palmer, has taken the route a little further east, *via* the Dalles and Fort Walla Walla. Others are preparing to follow.