

fordable; but the hungry desert and burning sun gradually reduces it till a "footy" pond, bordered by an impassable morass, contains it. About forty miles of arid desert lies between it and the sink of the Carson, which flows from an opposite direction. This river has its source in the snows of the Sierras, enters the valley bearing its name at its head, and after a course of one hundred and fifty miles, loses itself in like manner. All these streams are turbulent and rapid till they leave the main mountain ranges, and we may remark that the only good land is to be found on their banks. It has to be constantly irrigated to produce even a blade of grass.

Not even a hundredth part of the surface is arable. The greater part of it consists of broken and detached mountain ranges, attaining an elevation of from one to three or four thousand feet. It must be understood that they spring from a base at least six thousand feet above the sea level. These broken mountains are alternated with sandy wastes, covered with a scrubby furze called sage brush, or whitened with alkali; in the latter case impregnating the water with ingredients deleterious to man and deadly to all varieties of the brute creation. Cattle that are "alkalied" suffer extreme pain, and both before and after death swell to an enormous size. We find many expanses from ten to thirty miles in width and length, as level and hard as any floor, coated and whitened with this abominable compound. During the rainy season these flat expanses become perfect quagmires; but in summer the heat of the sun bakes them hard again. No rain falls during the entire summer; at least, if there is a shower, it is the exception and not the rule. Meat can be kept for an unlimited time without salt, by cutting it in strips, and then exposing it to the sun. All the moisture is evaporated: it becomes hard, and is then termed "jerked" meat. It is soaked in tepid water, and afterwards cooked in the usual manner; and I can testify that it is both good and wholesome.

This strange land is not more strange than the people who occupy it. Every nation has its representative, and each willing worker finds plenty to do, though in many cases the man and the employment are not altogether suited. We often find the lawyer, the finished scholar, the ex-gentleman, and the hardy son of toil occupying the same camp, and engaged at the same employment. The Chinaman, the Japanese, the Sandwich Islander, or "Kanaka," as he is called, and representatives of every nation of Europe have