

INTERESTING LETTER.

B. STREET, B. A., OF PALMYRA, TRAVELING FOR HIS HEALTH.

Tustin City, Cal., Jan. 8th '86.

DEAR FATHER:—You have asked me several times to give you a full description of the country, and I am at last settled down to the task. Well, as this is a description epistle, I am at a loss where to begin, as I have already given you an account of my journey.

After crossing the Colorado, you enter California at a point called the "Needles," so named, because there are three pyramidal shaped summits towering hundreds of feet above the neighboring hills, and which some imaginative mind thought resembled a needle. As you look back upon them they remind you of a gigantic tree divested of its branches. About three miles from this point is the station of the same name where everybody eats the first California meal. After leaving this place you enter the plain of "Sage bush and "Cacti," where, for hundreds of miles, not hill nor tree of any kind is to be seen, and all the water used on the road is brought to the tanks in immense tubs fastened upon flat-bottomed cars. It was a common sight to see a water train lying at the foot of a high embankment, and many times I wished our train would not run quite so rapidly around the curves. After a half-day's run we came to a track of alkali soil, perhaps fifteen miles in width, upon which no verdure of any kind is visible. It is as level as a house-floor. A hot box gave us the privilege of examining it, and upon nearer approach it was found to be a solid rock of a reddish color. Many comments were made by the passengers. Some proposed starting a roller skating rink, others a bicycle track. Soon the usual signal called us to our berths, and ere long we were sweltering under a broiling sun. We were now crossing the "Mojave" desert. The mercury registered 116° in the shade under a double roofed house. There are no stations in the desert. The battery and instruments used in Telegraphy were fastened to a pole, and there the operator stands in the sun the livelong day receiving and sending messages. At night he sleeps in his tent. After changing cars for the south we cross the Antelope Valley all studded with tree cactus, some twenty-five feet high. Now we are enveloped in utter darkness, and upon inquiry learn that we are in the San Fernando tunnel, which is about two miles in length. In a few more minutes we are in the city of Los Angeles, the pride of the south. It has some beautiful streets and fine buildings, but its magnificence is marred by China town and Signora town, from which the stench rises so dense that it would kill an Easterner in a week. The grandeur of the city lies in the palatial homes and the artistically decorated lawns of the English populace, its groves of oranges and lemons, and the evergreens which adorn the streets. Almost every kind of shrub flourishes in this salubrious climate. There are to be found those native to Brazil and to the tropical countries of America, the south of Europe and west of Asia. I remained a few days in town, long enough to take in the situation. I was very much surprised to see how little business is transacted therein. Its public buildings, places of business, and thoroughfare, are all inferior to those of our eastern towns. Alone in my room simply letting the idle thoughts of my fancy play, as I look out of my window my eyes are greeted by the appearance of large ancestral trees whose beautiful green branches spread like a benediction over the ground, and whose trunks are bright with moss or grey with age. Far to the north lies the snow-capped "Baldy" like a sleeping monster, yet rising with majestic grandeur far above all the other peaks of the "Sierras" or as we teach, the "Coast Range." From it the wind swoops

down in mad career filling the air with dust, and chilling the warm coast breeze. This is what we call a Santa Anna, and must be experienced to be enjoyed. To-day the air is still and calm, and brightly beams the sun from a cloudless and serene sky. No sound is heard save the footsteps of the stranger as he wends his way to "he knows not where," and the barking of the bandy-legged coyotes. No monotone of busy life is heard save the buzz of the "Butcher" bird and the hum of the bee as he extracts the sweetness from the orange blooms and hies away to his mountain home.

Such is Tustin, surrounded by a succession of beautiful rounded mounts, and situated in the "Santa Anna Valley," about twelve miles from the slumbering, sluggish Pacific, and to which, I, waif-like, and by some fortuitous circumstance drifted a few months ago.

Fruit raising is the only industry. Each resident has his vineyard and grove of oranges, prunes and apricots.

Our street are spacious, laid out at right angles to one another, and macadamized with either "deep dust" or "mud."

Tustin is acknowledged to be one of the first settlements of the south and noted as a health resort. Hedges of everygreen surround each ranch, and the streets are shaded by lofty poplars, eucalyptus and peppertrees. It is a perfect little paradise.

To me, however, its beauty is marred by the way in which its inhabitants desecrate the Sabbath. Very few attend service, while many enjoy the pleasure of a hunting expedition. I have had numerous rambles among the lower mountains, but I do not particularly care to venture in too far alone as the lion has his haunts there.

The surface of the ground is remarkably level, looking toward the southwest and the ocean. Through a break in the mountains and bordering the valley on the north flows the Santa Anna river, a considerable stream, which reaches the ocean during the rainy season, but which in summer, like all other California streams, after leaving the foot-hills, mostly disappears in the sand and by evaporation.

Rising in the Santiago Canyon and running through the northern part of the valley in the Santiago creek, from which most of the year a goodly supply of water for irrigation purposes is obtained. This Canyon is a favorite picnic resort, and three days ago it was my privilege to visit it.

An early morning drive brought us to the mountains and long ere the sun began to shine we had commenced the weary task of ascending. The way lay along the side of the mountain, winding in and out and many places cut out of the rock and so narrow that there is barely room for the passage of a wagon. Many times I thought we would roll to the foot, which lay hundreds of feet below us. Sometimes we would go down the ravines at break-neck speed. I almost wished I had remained at home, but I would shut my eyes and hang on. After three miles of this kind of road, we entered a beautiful little valley of amphitheatre shape just as the sun came peeping over the summits, and the picture there revealed was one of the most magnificent splendor. We were surrounded by a succession of charming hills so arranged that they appeared the work of art. There we go by a winding path over hill and dale, through a perfect labyrinth of sylvan beauty. On either side of you, like hill upon hill, beyond the pinnacle of each, appear others still higher. What charming distance! What a splendid perspective! The whole is enveloped in a growth whose foliage seemed to possess numberless trees magnificently and harmoniously blending in the first rays of the brightly beaming sun. When I attempt to describe landscape, how utterly inadequate words become. No matter how exact the description may be, its

breadth, grandeur, and splendor, of coloring hold you spell-bound, and must be seen to be appreciated. These enchantments are medicinal. They sober and heal us. Through such scenes we passed until we entered the Canyon, and there we found a lovely grove of "live oaks," which fill the narrow gorge to overflowing and over-spread the velvety carpeting of green. Wild grapevines have climbed to the very top of even the highest of them, and in spring mantle them with fairy festoons. Here the holly and mistletoe flourish. Through dangerous passages we drive, but what of that? When a boy I always had a desire to travel and to see strange sights.

Some one has said that "travelling increases a man's vitality if it does not kill him at the start." Well I am not dead yet and as far as flesh is concerned I will soon be a typical Teuton. I enjoyed this dangerous ride through the dry bed of a mountain torrent, perhaps, because one of my youthful dreams is going to be realized at its completion, viz., a visit to a mine. We were after coal. Immediately on arriving I seized a lamp and underground I go, a quarter of a mile. There the men are at work digging the "dusty diamonds." But, oh! the blackness is so dense that your flickering lamp gives scarce light enough to show you where to step. We return by a safer road which has no marked interest except it has a peculiar as an appetizer.

I am afraid I shall weary you with so long a letter but there are so many things of interest to me that I do not know where to stop.

I shall write you shortly giving you some idea of the system of irrigation, and the raising of raisins.

I have about recovered from the effects of the fever. My health generally is improving and I am enjoying my trip very much.

Hope you are all well.

Love to all.

I Am Still,

Your Affectionate Son,

RICHARD.

Sir George Stephen.

Toronto Mail:—In honoring with a baronetcy the President of the Canadian Pacific railway Her Majesty has worthily recognized the extraordinary ability and energy with which that gentleman has carried on the colossal work which he and his associates have had in hand during the past five years. Sir George Stephen, although not a Canadian by birth, is one of the men of whom this country may well be proud. He was born at Dufftown, Banffshire, Scotland, on June 5th, 1829, and received his education at that place. At the age of fifteen he went into the "drygoods" business in Aberdeen, in which city he remained four years. Thence he went to London, where he continued in the same business until 1850. In the latter year he came to Canada, and took an interest in the wholesale dry goods business in Montreal of the late William Stephen, his father's first cousin. In 1865, on the death of the head of the firm, Mr. George Stephen took over the business and carried it on very successfully for several years. He was also one of the pioneers of the woolen industry in Canada, and director of the Bank of Montreal, and afterwards became the President of that institution. On retiring from the latter position he with others took hold of the Manitoba and Minneapolis railway, and finally, when the Canadian Government called for capitalists to undertake the construction of our great national highway. Sir George Stephen was married in 1853 to Miss Kane, daughter of a clergyman of the Church of England.

The Panama Canal.

M. de Lesseps will remain a fortnight at Panama. He declares his task there is a far easier one than was the construction of the Suez canal. He says the Panama canal will be completed by the end of 1888.

BIG BARGAINS BOOMING

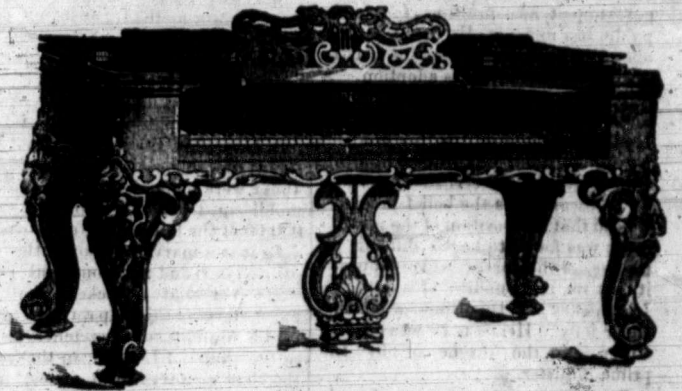
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(From the London Free Press.)

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Keeping in view the best interests of our thousands of readers, we wish to inform them (although it is a well-known fact to many) that Mr. Charles F. Colwell Proprietor of "Colwell's Popular Music House," of this city, is one of the most successful, energetic and honorable business men in Western Canada. He deals only in first-class instruments, and will have nothing whatever to do with "shoddy" in any form.

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