

THE CUSTOM OF THE COUNTRY

that the stage had been set for an interview. But if Dixie had any intentions, she concealed them effectually, and her manner was one of good-natured tolerance.

"Well, look at that crazy fool ride," she observed, as Brig disappeared in his own dust. "You'd think from the way he travels he was the keenest lover in the world." She paused here and laughed to herself.

"Yes, indeed!" responded Bowles, with a certain brotherly pride. "Old Brig thinks a lot of that girl."

"Well, maybe he does," conceded Dixie; "but he certainly makes me provoked. I declare, the way some of these men——" she paused again and bit her lip. Mr. Bowles was one of those men, too. "I reckon it's all right," she continued resignedly; "but when a woman has to ride clear over to the Gila, and propose for a man, and steal his girl for him, and then round him up and send him in, I guess she has some excuse to speak her mind. Don't you think so, Mr. Bowles? Well, then, if your friend Brigham had had his way, he would have hit for the summit of the White Mountains, and his girl would have been married to a Mormon! It makes me mad, Mr. Bowles, I declare it does! The idea of leaving that poor little girl over there and never going near her, when all the time she