

"And heard nothing that was good, I reckon." This, with some bitterness of tone. He then continued, speaking rapidly :

"Yes, I told my wives to call me Doyle to strangers ; they've been kicking up such a muss about polygamy, McKean and them, and I'm a man that's had eighteen wives ; but now that the Supreme Court has decided that polygamy's part of a man's religion, and the law's got nothin' to do with it ; it do n't make no difference, I reckon."

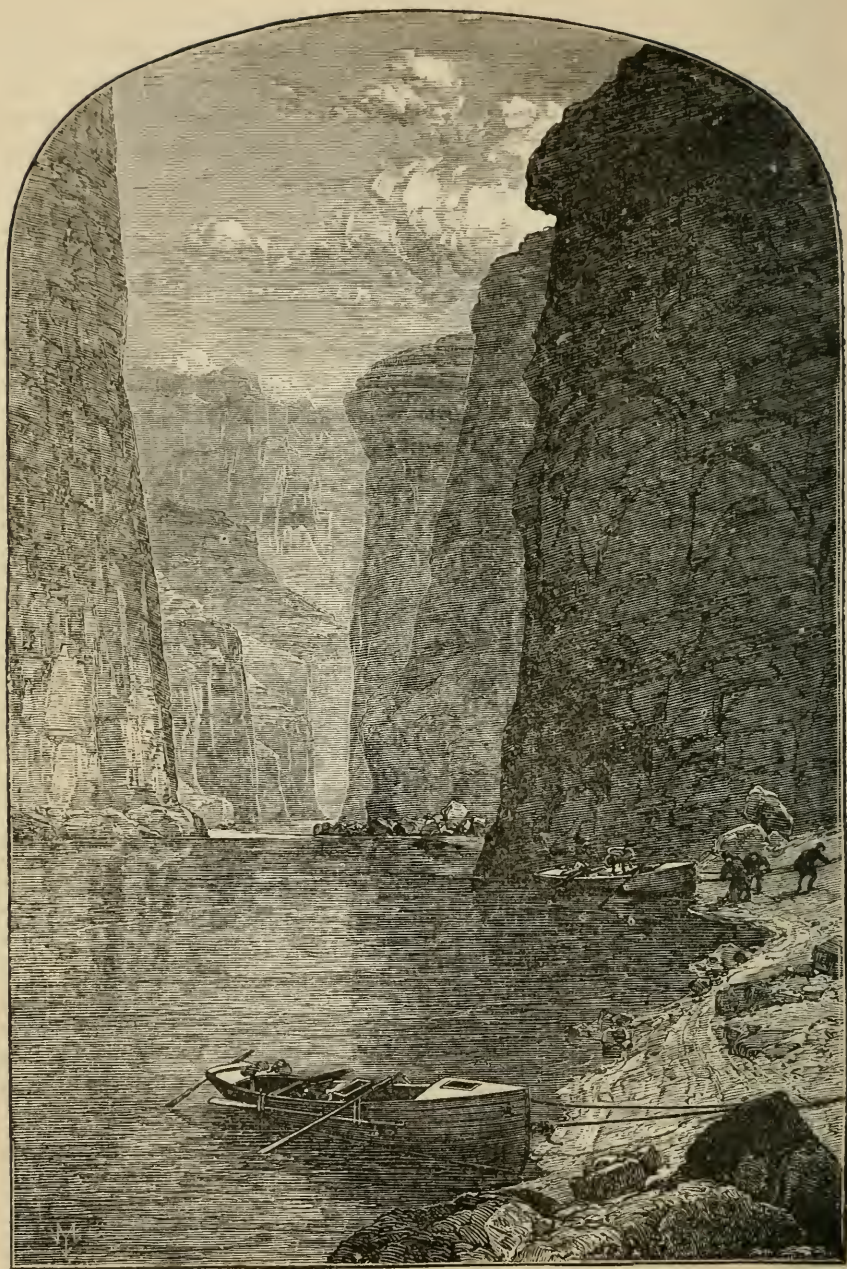
Of course this was only a subterfuge, but I could not have ventured to recur to the real reason of his being located in this wild place, if he had not approached the subject himself soon after. Then I hinted as delicately as possible, that if it were not disagreeable to him, I should like to hear "the true account of that affair which had been the cause of his name being so prominent." It had grown dark meanwhile, and this gave him, I thought, more freedom in his talk. (It is to be noted that he did not know my name or business.) Clearing his throat nervously, he began, with many short stops and repetitions :

"Well, I suppose you mean that—well, that Mountain Meadow affair? Well, I'll tell you what is the exact truth of it, as God is my Judge, and the why I am out here like an outlaw—but I'm a goin' to die like a man, and not be choked like a dog—and why my name's published all over as the vilest man in Utah, on account of what others did—but I never will betray my brethren, no, never—which it is told for a sworn fact that I violated two girls as they were kneeling and begging to me for life ; but, as God is my Judge, and I expect to stand before Him, it is all an infernal lie."

He ran off this and much more of the sort with great volubility ; then seemed to grow more calm, and went on :

"Now, sir, I'll give you the account exactly as it stood, though for years I've rested under the most infamous charges ever cooked up on a man. I've had to move from point to point, and lost my property, when I might have cleared it up any time by just saying who was who. I could have proved that I was not in it, but not without bringing in other men to criminate them. But I wouldn't do it. They had trusted in me, and their motives were good at the start, bad as the thing turned out.

"But about the emigrants. They was the worst set that ever crossed the plains, and they made it so as to get here just when we was at war. Old Buchanan had sent his army to destroy us, and we had made up our minds that they should not find any spoil. We had been making preparations for two years, drying wheat and *caching* it in the mountains ; and intended, when worst come to worst, to burn and



HEAD OF THE GRAND CAÑON.



destroy every thing, and take to the mountains and fight it out guerilla style. And I tell you this people was all hot and enthusiastic, and just at that time these emigrants came.

"Now they acted more like devils than men; and just to give you an idea what a hard set they was: when Dr. Forney gathered up the children two years after—fifteen, I believe, they was—and sent word back to their relatives, they sent word that they didn't want 'em, and wouldn't have any thing to do with 'em. And that old Dr. Forney treated the children like dogs, hammerin' 'em around with his big cane.

"The company had quarreled and separated east of the mountains, but it was the biggest half that come first. They come south of Salt Lake City just as all the men was going out to the war, and lots of women and children lonely. Their conduct was scandalous. They swore and boasted openly that they helped shoot the guts out of Joe Smith and Hyrum Smith, at Carthage, and that Buchanan's whole army was coming right behind them, and would kill every G—d d—n Mormon in Utah, and make the women and children slaves, and . . . They had two bulls, which they called one 'Heber' and the other 'Brigham,' and whipped 'em thro' every town, yelling and singing, blackguarding and blaspheming oaths that would have made your hair stand on end. At Spanish Fork—it can be proved—one of 'em stood on his wagon-tongue, and swung a pistol, and swore that he helped kill old Joe Smith, and was ready for old Brigham Young, and all sung a blackguard song, 'Oh, we've got the ropes and we'll hang old Brigham before the snow flies,' and all such stuff. Well, it was mighty hard to bear, and when they got to where the Pahvant Indians was, they shot one of them dead and crippled another. But the worst is coming.

"At Corn Creek, just this side of Fillmore, they poisoned a spring and the flesh of an ox that died there, and gave that to the Indians, and some Indians died. Then the widow Tomlinson, just this side, had an ox poisoned at the spring, and she thought to save the hide and tallow; and rendering it up, the poison got in her face, and swelled it up, and she died. This roused every body. Well, they came on down the road, and with their big Missouri whips would snap off the heads of chickens and throw 'em into their wagons; and when a widow, Missis Evans, came out and said: 'Don't kill my chickens, gentlemen, I'm a poor woman,' one of 'em yelled, 'Shut up you G—d d—d Mormon, or I'll shoot you!' Then her sons and all her folks got out with guns, and swore they'd have revenge on the whole outfit.

“By this time the Indians had gathered from all directions, and overtook 'em at Mountain Meadow. They planned it to crawl down a narrow ravine and get in close, and make a rush altogether. But one fool Indian fired too soon and gave the alarm. This spoiled the plan, but all in reach fired, and killed, well, five or six men. Then a sort o' siege began. The men inside did well—the best they could have done. They got the wagons *corrals* and dug rifle-pits. The Indians could not hit any more of the people, but shot nearly all their oxen and some horses. I believe it was after three or four days' siege that I went to the Indians and tried to persuade them away; for our folks had had a council, and while I said, ‘Persuade the Indians away, the other brethren said, ‘Let the Indians punish them.’ I said to the Indians ‘You've killed more of them than died of your men, and you've harassed them a good deal, killed their stock, and punished them enough—now let them go.’ But they said these white men were all bad, and they would kill all. Jacob Hamlin, the agent, you know, was away from home then, and I had n't much control over the Indians. We was weak then in that section to what we are now, and did not really have the upper hand of the Indians; and maybe, if we interfered with 'em, it would cause trouble with us. I heard women inside begging and praying, and saying that if the Mormons knew how they were situated they would come and help, no matter if some had treated 'em badly. And they begged some of the fellows to break out and go and get help. Then I run a big risk to get inside the *corral*. It was pitch dark, and I could see the line of fire from the guns, and the balls whistled all about me. One cut my shirt in front, and another my sleeve, and I could not get through. But I went back, and was pretty near getting the Indians all right, and would have succeeded fully, but then come the thing that spoiled all.

“Three of the emigrants had broken out of the *corral* and gone back for help; and next day met some of our boys at a spring. Well, I don't excuse our men—they were enthusiastic, you know, but their motives were good. They knew these emigrants at once; one of them was the man that insulted widow Evans, another the one that swung his pistol and talked so at Spanish Fork. The boys fell on them at sight, shot one dead and wounded another. But the two of them got back to the company.

“Then came another council, and all our men said: ‘We can't let 'em go now; the boys has killed some, and it won't do to let one get through alive, or here they'll come back on us with big reinforce-

ments.' And, to be sure, why should we risk any thing, and maybe have a fuss with the Indians, to save people who done nothing but abuse us? But I still said, 'Let 'em go; they've been punished enough.'

"I never will mention any names, or betray my brethren. Those men were God-fearing men. Their motives were pure. They knelt down and prayed to be guided in council. But they was full of zeal. Their zeal was greater than their knowledge.

"I went once more to the Indians, and begged them to kill only the men. They said they would kill every one; then I told them I would buy all the children, so all the children was saved. There was not over fifteen white men actually went in with the Indians, and I don't believe a single emigrant was actually killed by a white man.

"An express had been sent to Brigham Young at first to know what to do, and it is a pity it didn't get back; for those enthusiastic men *will* obey counsel. The president sent back orders, and told the man to ride night and day, by all means to let the emigrants go on; to call off the Indians, and for no Mormons to molest them. But the thing was all over before the express got back to Provo. There was about eighty fighting men that was killed. I don't know how many women, though not many. All the children was saved. The little boy that lived with us cried all night when he left us, and said he'd come back to us as soon as he got old enough. Old Forney, when he come for 'em, got all in his tent and would not let 'em visit or say good-bye to any body. One run away and hid under the floor of the house, and Forney dragged him out and beat him like a dog with his cane. They say he murdered the baby on the plains, because it was sickly and troublesome.

"It is told around for a fact that I could tell great confessions, and bring in Brigham Young and the Heads of the Church. But if I was to make forty confessions, I could not bring in Brigham Young. His counsel was: 'Spare them, by all means.' But I am made to bear the blame. Here I am, old, poor, and lonely, away down in this place—carrying the sins of my brethren. But if I endure, great is my reward. Bad as that thing was, I will not be the means of bringing troubles on my people; for, you know yourself, that this people is a misrepresented and cried-down community. Yes, a people scattered and peeled, whose blood was shed in great streams in Missouri, only for worshiping God as he was revealed to them; and if at the last they did rise up and shed blood of their enemies, I won't consent to give 'em up."

Such was the remarkable story told me by Major John Doyle Lee. I