



**Scenes in the Rocky Mountains, and in Oregon,
California, New Mexico, Texas, and the Grand
Prairies: Or, Notes by the Way, During an
Excursion of ... Including Their Geography,
Geology, Resource**

Rufus B. Sage

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Excerpt from Scenes in the Rocky Mountains, and in Oregon, California, New Mexico, Texas, and the Grand Prairies: Or, Notes by the Way, During an Excursion of Three Years, With a Description of the Countries Passed Through, Including Their Geography, Geology, Resources, Present Condition, and the Different Nations Inhabiting Them

The growing interest entertained by the American public in reference to the subjects mainly treated upon in the volume now before the reader, is deemed a sufficient apology for its appearance. The late act of our National Legislature in the annexation of Texas, bringing with it, as it does, a very considerable portion of the Province of Santa Fe, together with the existing hostilities between our own and the Republic of Mexico, preparing the way for a no distant acquisition of the Californias, not to mention the recent agitation of the American claim to the whole of Oregon, as yet scarcely subsided, has directed the attention of most minds more than usually towards the affairs and condition of the Great West - particularly that section of it contiguous to the Rocky Mountains. But, although our newspapers teem with professed descriptions of those countries embraced within its limits, and are redundant with animadversions upon their admitted importance - while the ambitious politician prates of them learnedly, and quotes by the day from fugitive paragraphs of doubtful verity, gleaned here and there as chance may favor him - a palpable ignorance is evinced throughout in regard to a vast store of interesting particulars.

To fill up in some measure this wide vacuum of general information, is the authors object in his present undertaking. With this view he has endeavored to present a full and comprehensive picture of the real condition of regions so attractive as are the above, and in so doing he is conscious of having erred in no important particular. Whatever is affirmed, may be relied upon as matter of fact; while details of a questionable nature may be inferred from the guarded language in which they are expressed. So far as his personal knowledge is concerned, he has spoken without reserve; but information based upon second-hand authority, is given as such.

The catalogue of facts relative to the manner in which the fur trade is conducted, and the enormities chargeable upon the individuals engaged in it, may be objected to as unnecessarily minute; but, regarded, as it should be, as one of the explanatory causes of Indian degradation, it will hardly fail to secure a ready acquiescence from the reader. Justice to the red man demands only a rehearsal of the simple truth, that condemnation may be awarded to the doubly guilty.

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