

## Western Wilds, and the Men Who Redeem Them: An Authentic Narrative (Classic Reprint)

J. H. Beadle

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Excerpt from Western Wilds, and the Men Who Redeem Them: An Authentic Narrative

In writing this work the author had two objects in view: to interest the reader; and to tell the exact truth about the country west of the Mississippi. As to the first, there is neither argument nor assertion; the reader can only judge for himself after perusal. But, as to the second, the author firmly believes he has accomplished it. The Far West is an immense region, and no one man ever visited all sections of it. The most to be expected is that each traveler shall seize upon the salient features of certain portions, and describe them in popular style. I have labored earnestly to give facts in regard to the lands still open to settlement; and I have been especially careful to correct certain errors as to soil and climate which I find very common in the East. We often hear it confidently asserted, and by those who ought to know, that "the American Desert is a myth there is no desert in the West." I am sorry this statement is not true; but if there are not at least 300,000 square miles of utterly barren land, then "mine eyes are made the fools o' the other senses," for I have lived and traveled many a week where not one acre in a hundred is fertile. I have aimed to avoid personalities, but I can not altogether refrain from harsh expressions as to the misstatements made in many land circulars; or the colored falsehoods of many maps, made "to invite immigration."

Some critics will object that the work contains rather more about Utah and the Mormons than the subject warrants; and it is, perhaps, but natural that one should write at length on that which most interests him. But I apprehend this Utah question is one on which Americans generally need information; it is liable to call for prompt action by government at any time, and the people should be prepared to sustain their Representatives in all constitutional means to relieve the Nation of this disgrace. The author has been accused of undue prejudice against Brigham Young and other Mormon leaders; more space is therefore given to the legal evidence of their crimes than is usual in a popular work. Eight years ago I hunted up, from a score of sources, the facts of the Mountain Meadow Massacre; and, when published, there was a loud outcry that I had overdrawn the picture - "made it a newspaper sensation."

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