

souri; Francis Wells, of the Philadelphia *Bulletin*; Judge Kingman, of Kansas; Hon. J. P. Usher, of Indiana; and Hon. C. H. Branscomb, of Missouri.

The sentiments uttered by all these gentlemen were in perfect accord with the resolutions adopted at the first meeting. All seemed to be deeply impressed with the grandeur and utility of the great enterprise which they had come so far to witness, and with not a single dissent they commended it to the fostering care of the National Legislature. The next adjournment was to a large tent, where an excellent dinner awaited us. Soon after dinner, those of the excursionists who are going further west took leave of their friends who are returning to their homes, including all the ladies. Some fifteen gentlemen of the party, with Mr. Perry, the President of this road, set out to-morrow for Pond Creek, accompanied by Major General Hancock, with a small military force, who is going west, in pursuance of his duties as commander of this department of the service. Pond Creek is two hundred miles further up the Smoky Hill, and west of Fort Harker. I return to-morrow to meet the Senatorial party, headed by Senator Wade, (who have just returned from the Platte, and are coming up this road,) and accompany them in their excursion over this road.

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LETTER II.— *Tornadoes and Rain — Party to Pond Creek — A Ranch — Solidity of the Earth — Wells — Length of the Smoky Hill.*

SALINA, (KANSAS,) June 10, 1867.

I HAVE been here since Saturday afternoon, detained by the washing out of a small culvert below here. We hope to get off at noon. On Friday night and Saturday we had a succession of as heavy showers as I ever saw. All the streams were swollen to the size of little rivers, and the Smoky Hill is said to be higher than it has been for six or seven years. The level prairie on which the town stands was literally one broad shallow sheet of water on Saturday evening.

I parted from my friends, who are going to Pond Creek — two hundred miles east of Ellsworth — on Saturday morning. The party consisted of some twenty gentlemen, among whom were Major General Hancock, John D. Perry, Esq., President of this road, Mr. Shoemaker, Chief Contractor, Hon. Messrs. Thomas, of Maryland, Hubbard, of West Virginia, Mr. E. D. Kennedy, of Pittsburg, several correspondents of Eastern papers, and others; altogether a very pleasant party. It was at first arranged that I should go, but afterwards that I should