

TOPOGRAPHY OF ARIZONA

MRS. C. RODNEY MACDONALD

During the time that this section of country belonged to Mexico it bore the name of Arizonac, meaning small quantities of springs—Ari—small, and zunac—spring.

The Gadsden purchase, Dec. 20, 1853, gave this land to the United States of America. The years between 1853 and 1860 mark the time when Arizona was taking shape, setting boundary lines in order and choosing a name. The general topography played a part in the naming of this territory "small quantities of springs." The boundary lines included 113,916 square miles of mountains and deserts, rich in gold and lure. For many years the mountains and cliffs, deserts and rivers were prospected for gold.

It has been said that from every point in Arizona mountains fringe the horizon. Mount Flagstaff is a great triple-peaked volcanic cone 14,000 feet high. One of the few natural lakes lies nearby—St. Mary's Lake.

Mount Picacho is a huge splintered battleax shaped peak of red sand stone, an old landmark on the trail from Tucson to the Mexican border.

Then there are the great, giant, granite peaks which formed a refuge for the Apache chieftain, Cochise, in his last desperate struggle.

In the upper Verde Valley are the rich tinted cliffs and walls of red rock; then the San Francisco Peaks, and, farther to the south, the Mongollon (Much-e-ones) ranges. Today we may travel by rail two hundred miles thru scenic grandeur builded because the early prospectors, by a series of stairways and zigzag trails, penetrated into the alluring Bradshaw Range and were rewarded with gold. And the railroad followed the prospector.

In 1863 the old Vulture Mine began to give up her treasure to the persisting endeavors of Mr. Wickenburg. We may say of Arizona that: "Mighty rocks and little grains of sand, made the wrinkled mountains and the desert land."

Today science has unlocked many grand old silent places and we may trek over the old trails and peer into the wonderful array of canon, cliff, desert and mountain in comfort. "We

may cross the wide, low washes, where the strange sand rivers flow, or mount to the rim of the canon, and see the waters dash a mile below."

The Grand Canyon is one of the greatest educators of the world. If you never thought deeply of the Creator, climb to the rim of the canyon, or stand on the edge of the high mesa at sunrise, and you will understand why the Indian mother carried her baby there at dawn and looked full into the face of the rising sun, as the grandmother named the new-born child.

The Petrified Forest also is a part of the formation of our land; these grand old trees, grown a million or more years ago, must have delighted the Creator, and former civilizations with their grandeur as they flung their trunks high into the golden sunlight, or at night-time when they were flooded by the gentle rays of the moon. Then, after centuries of unalloyed glory, another shifting of the Earth floor; and these same old trees now become stone, caressed the earth and became a part of the earth. Perhaps at this very same shifting the floor parted or cracked and the Grand Canyon of the Colorado came into existence, as this rift grew.

Padre Francisco, in his search for souls, was forced to turn aside from this formidable barrier. He wrote the first record of this appalling chasm—less than two hundred years ago. We are young, so very young, when measured by the span of time and things.

Thus the baby state, with the challenge of youth, and sparkling with vivacity, and the conjuring spirit of endeavor takes the place among the older sister states, ever conscious of a great debt to the Creator who sprinkled gold nuggets in the Big Bug and Lynx creeks, and placed a crown of gold on Rich-hill.

Gold was the impelling urge that has transformed this rugged land into softer tones, with sheltered homes and where water, developed into artificial lakes has made inroads into the early topography. Many meteors have come to our land to rest and are now forming a part of it—shall we call them Star Dust? Are they just building material? Their landing must have made the world grow a little bit. Perhaps God did not make the world after all—He is just growing it.

Within the state there is a never-ending shifting of scenery. Valleys, mountains, rivers, deserts and cacti field, mingled with the fertile farms lovely with country homes, and thriving cities which makes the New Arizona even more entrancing than the old.