

LORD OF THE DESERT

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CHAPTER I. THE OREGON "DESERT."

From the north boundary line to the south boundary line of the state, there lies in Eastern Oregon a strip of territory about 400 miles long and about 200 miles wide, which was once known as the Great Oregon Desert, and through which ran the old Oregon trail.

This desert, unlike most deserts, contains many oases. There are running streams of pure water, and numerous springs boil from the sides of the mountains and rise even from desert sands; and wherever this water touches fertile soil, beautiful meadows of native grass greeted the eye of the occasional adventurer.

But these seemed few and far between in early days; and for lack of knowledge of their location many a weary traveler lost his way between them, and his bleached bones for many years afterward marked the last place where he laid himself down to rest.

Even in these days when much of the ground, accessible to water, is occupied by the pioneer homesteader, one may travel a hundred miles or more without encountering a single human habitation, or living thing.

The Oregon desert is practically a succession of mountain plateaus. It is at a high altitude at every point. To reach it from most any direction one must climb a great mountain range, and descend at intervals among snow-capped peaks and through rock-bound canyons and gulches; and to cross it, one must traverse wide stretches of barren plains that never taste of water, except from the melting snows of winter, and must also encounter lava beds and walls of rock seemingly insurmountable.

These plains remind one of a huge extinct volcanic crater, although they cover thousands of acres in area, and it takes days of travel to cross many of them. They vary in size, however, from small plateaus of a few acres to the illimitable outstretched plains. But they all bear the same characteristics. The traveler, when passing through a small basin or a great plateau, is struck with same impression. A wall surrounds each of these basins or plateaus and separates one from another. These walls consist of rocks piled upon one another with masonry care, the joints being broken as perfectly and smoothly as if done by skilled human hands. These walls are perpendicular from top to bottom, and through these the traveler may find his way from one basin to another.

The smaller plains were the scenes of many conflicts, and were often places of great slaughter in early days. Bands of deer and antelope often wandered into them, and there, watching Indian came upon them, and guarding the only places of outlet would charge down upon the engaged animals and slaughter a whole band. And these animals were not the only victims to Indian cunning and bloodthirstiness. Many an immigrant train whose members had become exhausted and careless from want of proper food and water, and they, with the care of their fatted animals, reduced to mere skeletons from plodding through the burning sands and drawing heavy loads over the fifty rocks, without feed or water, while passing through these canyons and beneath the rimrocks, came under a shower of poisoned arrows that left death along the trail.

The heaps of rocks in the gulches and canyons, and the little mounds scattered over the plains, are yet indexes to many of these sad stories. Captain Jack had his territory, and had some principle, although he died on the gallows, but the marauding chiefs, Egan and Paulina, knew no limits of territory and knew no limits of cruelty and bloodshed. The peaks, buttes, streams and canyons still bear their names from one end of the desert to the other, and there is no landmark that guides the traveler through the plains that does not recall some memory of the terrible crimes of these two chiefs and their bloodthirsty warriors, and many of these were committed even after the arrival of the bold and determined General Crook.

But in early days wherever there was water and natural meadows, animals of all kinds thrived. Horses and cattle were plentiful, and wild game, from the monarch grizzly to the common jackrabbit, including elk, deer, antelope, mountain sheep, mountain lion, cougar, coyote, wildcat, and marten roamed at will, and were seldom disturbed by the hand of man. The flesh of the game animals was the tenderest and best, while the furs produced in this section were considered the best in the market.

It was the paradise of the hunter and trapper.

CHAPTER II. THE LORD OF THE DESERT.

In the center of one of these plateaus containing hundreds of thousands of acres of land, is a low round mountain. From the distance it looks like a mountain peak, and is called Mount Juniper, but from its base to its summit it is only about one thousand feet. Its south side is covered with rusty evergreen of the Juniper species, from which the mountain takes its name, while the summit and east and north and west sides are bare, and huge boulders lie piled upon one another, and deep canyons cut their way down its sides.

In the canyons on the south side numerous springs boil forth and send their waters dashing over the rocks to the plains below, the moist from which produces a meadow at the foot of the mountain of several hundred acres. A fence of barbed wire at-

tached to juniper posts, protects this meadow from the stock for which it is not intended.

At the foot of the mountain, and surrounded by tall clusters of junipers, is a large single-story house, built of the rocks that from time to time have rolled down the mountain. To the east are stables, corrals, hay-racks, watering troughs, and all the appurtenances of an old-time western ranch. To the west is a garden spot irrigated from pipes that run from a reservoir fed by springs higher up the hill, and in the rear is a young orchard where every indication points to the fact that the trees are being nurtured and cultivated for experimental purposes. In front of the great stone building beautiful walks are laid out, along which shrubbery, roses and flowers of many varieties grow, with a beautiful green lawn for a background. Fountains play in the sunlight through the heat of the day, and the ice-cold spring water is thus tempered for the tender roots of the young vegetation.

The grounds about the house, including orchard, garden, stables and cowbarns, are inclosed with a rock wall several feet high, with loopholes here and there in the wall, which show that the place was constructed with a view of being able to defend itself in case an attack was made from the outside.

But it is the interior of the house that the reader should see. In the front room there are easy chairs, lounges, tables, books and writing materials. On the walls there are pictures. To stop here one would imagine himself in a cultivated home in a thickly settled country, but in glancing further one sees reminders of the fact that one is in reality in a frontier place of abode. By the side of the outer doors stand the latest nomenclature of rifles and guns of all makes hung in the racks over the doors and about the walls. Large revolvers swing from points here and there like ornaments, while numerous

varieties of this deadly weapon adorn the tables in the room.

In the main bedroom this same abundance of firearms exist, and in this room, as in the front room, a large table stands in one corner and upon it is fastened all of the latest improved apparatus for loading and reloading cartridge shells, and an abundant supply of ammunition is at hand to withstand an ordinary siege.

The other rooms of the building are only ordinary bedrooms, showing the lack of care and attention usually found in bachelor's quarters, while the dining-room and kitchen are large and spacious, and a large supply of provisions are stored away to keep a large number for an indefinite period. The front bedroom, like the kitchen and dining-room, is kept in perfect order. These and the front room are frequently visited and occupied by the owner, and they must be kept intact, or the derelict may suffer more than a storm of words. But the other rooms of the house present a different aspect; the beds are unmade, and men's wearing apparel are scattered about the floor; broken matches, half consumed candles, and, in fact, a general miscellany of unimportant things make up the debris of the rooms. But there is a deserted appearance about the place. Save a slight noise from the cooking apparatus occasioned by the work of a stout, round-faced Englishman, who might be taken for almost any age, and who does the work of chef, cook, dishwasher, housekeeper and man-of-all-work, in performing his routine labors, no other sound is heard.

But there are two occupants of the place at this time. In the front room a man sits at a peculiarly constructed chair in deep meditation. An anxious look occupies his countenance, and now and then a cloud seems to obscure his whole face. It lights up with a beam of pleasure for a moment, as if the way looked clear to the thinker, then the clouds again, followed by gleams of light and grimaces caused by a tortured conscience. The chair upon which he sits is a home-made affair. It has huge posts and a high back, with long, awkwardly-constructed rockers that give it the appearance of having been made for a giant. The front posts extend up almost even with the arm-pits, and support wide arms—so broad that they look like tables. In the left hand of the man occupying the chair is a book, but the thumb only marks the place to where he has read and his arm lies carelessly on the table-like arm of the chair. On the right table, or arm of the chair, sits a goblet half-filled with old Scotch whiskey, the right hand clasping it gently. Although the glass is conveyed to his lips occasionally it is never permitted to become empty, a demijohn within easy reach being drawn upon at intervals when the fluid runs low in the glass.

The chair does not only look as if it had been made for a giant, but a modern giant does occupy it. Six feet three, when standing, large limbs and spare hands, the man shows wonderful strength, though his constitution has been suffering with Scotch whisky and a remorseful conscience for many years. A broad mouth, long nose, deep set eyes, large ears and high cheek bones show as plainly as does his brogue that he is a Scotchman. Like his servant of the kitchen, he might also be taken for almost any age. His smooth-shaven face, reddish complexion and close clipped hair, give the casual observer the impression that he is not more than forty, but the wrinkles in his face and neck, and the solid grey that intermingles the light red hair, tell the close observer that he is at least sixty if not more.

"Will she make it here without a

misshap," he muttered, with an anxious look upon his face, and then in almost inaudible tones, "What will be the result if she reaches this place in safety? But she will never do it!" and he took a quaff from the goblet to relieve the terrors of his soul, which were depicted in his face.

CHAPTER III. A Midnight Surprise.

"And how did you leave dear uncle?" inquired a young woman in a voice of innocence.

"Oh, in the very best of spirits," replied a rugged frontiersman, covered with the dust of the plains.

"And how long shall it be before we reach his place?" inquired the same female voice.

"Within about two days—that is if nothing happens to prevent it," replied the man.

"But nothing can happen to prevent it, except an extraordinary event, can it?" inquired the girl assuredly, and continuing as if to remove all doubt, "you look fresh, your men are all fresh and your horses look as if they were anxious to start on the return journey."

"That is all true, Madam, but in this country we never count on anything until it's accomplished, and the 'extraordinary' is likely to happen any time."

"Oh, then are we to pass through a dangerous section?" inquired the maiden with some alarm.

"No, not particularly, but when the Snakes are skulking among the rocks they are likely to strike at any time," replied the frontiersman.

"What kind of snakes are they?" inquired the young woman. "I have read of your American snakes," she continued, "and know that there must be very many varieties, and that they must be dangerous but never read of them biting people on horseback."

"But these Snakes bite at any time and at any place," replied the man with a smile. "They prefer the dark however, and more often strike from ambush. To be plain with you, Madam, and you must be a nifty girl if you have crossed the ocean and come this far alone, the Snakes I speak of are Indians, belonging to the tribe of Piutes called Snakes for the very reason that they strike from ambush."

"Then are we in imminent peril?" inquired the girl with self-possession.

"No, no, not that, Miss, we might make this trip a dozen times without being molested, but the Snakes are on the warpath now, and while cattle stealing and horse stealing is their principle object, they are not averse to a bigger prey, especially when the odds are in their favor. They go in small bands, though, and our boys are capable of holding their own with most of them. As it is getting late and we wish an early start in the morning, I would advise you to retire and get a good rest, for a couple of hundred miles on the back of a cayuse will prove a task for a tender young lady like you, and the young man walked away to her tent, Dan Follett muttered to himself: "A pretty fair flower to be plucked by the Piutes!"

EGYPTIAN GIRLS AT PLAY.

In her "Recollections of an Egyptian Princess" the author describes a little game at romps in the garden of the palace which discloses a very close touch of nature. The princess was seated near a little lake, which had been constructed in a serpentine shape, winding about under rustic bridges.

She was laughing and scolding one of her attendants, when the girl broke away, crying out, "My mistress is angry with me! I'll drown myself!" and rushed into the water.

The princess called out, "Oh, stop her! Stop her!" and three or four followed immediately. But the first knew well enough that the water was not more than three feet deep, so she had done it for a joke, and she turned round and threw water in the faces of her pursuers.

The princess had seen the joke directly after the cry had escaped her, and now joined heartily in the fun, and urged others to help in the capture. The general barem dress when warm weather set in was white Indian grass-cloth, more or less dense, made loose, and confined at the waist by a colored sash, a ribbon to match being usually worn round the throat, and to tie back the hair.

The dress could not be hurt by the immersion, but the ribbons might be spoiled. Some were seen to cast a glance on their pretty ties, which was a signal to those who saw the look to rush upon them at once and push them in.

There was nothing but screaming and laughing, several sporting themselves in the water, others pursued all over the garden, met at the cross-roads, turning and doubling on their pursuers. The princess clapped her hands with delight and laughed unrestrainedly, and the girls themselves were immensely pleased with the joke.

RADIUM IS DANGEROUS.

Is a Source of Powerful and Scorching Roentgen Rays.

The rare substance radium has been brought into much prominence of late by the investigations of Becquerel, Curie and others. A constant source of Roentgen rays so powerful that it should be carried in a lead tube to avoid danger of burns, is a bit startling to say the least, and while its visible radiation is not strong, its extraordinary properties are enough to set one thinking strenuously. The real nature of the radiations is, of course, involved in the same mystery that surrounds the Roentgen ray.

In spite of the very large and valuable body of work that has been done upon this subject, the ultimate nature of the phenomena is still very far from a satisfactory explanation, since several hypotheses meet the facts fairly well, and no one of them can be verified without involving still further hypotheses as part of the argument. But the behavior of radium opens a beautiful vista of possibilities.

What would happen in the art of illumination if some one should hit upon a luminous paint fifty times as brilliant and permanent as the ordinary calcium sulphide variety? If one had only to expose the light-giving body to sunlight or bright daylight for a few hours to obtain storage or energy for the evening, how the electrical arts would get shaken up? And yet such a discovery is far less improbable, says the Electrical World, than some that have actually been made—like Moissan's diamonds, let us say. But diamonds are so cheaper yet, and do not sparkle as long as every fair bosom,

RANGE OF THE RAMAPOs.

A Wild Region Lying Close to New York City.

Who would believe that within thirty-two miles of New York city there are mountain dwellings in a district so wild and rough that they are inaccessible even to the feet of ponies; that no produce can be taken out to nor supplies brought in from these farms save on the backs of men; that the people gain their living by making baskets, wooden spoons and such light articles as they can transport on their shoulders; that even the bodies of the dead cannot be taken out, but must be buried in the forest or in the yards of the mountain cabins? A region where the people are so primitive in their ways, though not so lawless in their tendencies, as the Tennessee mountaineers?—It is hard to believe, but it is true.

When, in the middle of August, I pitched my tent on the easterly side of the easterly range of the Ramapos, in Rockland County, close to a mountain stream, I did not know that just over the range of these wild mountains descendants of the Tory rangers of 1770 were yet to be found. I did not know that the higher reaches of the mountains were tolerably full of rattlesnakes of great size and beauty. I did not know that the wild dogs lived up there. I only perceived that the hills were beautiful, the air pure and invigorating, the woods practically unbroken and the streams clear and cold. I perceived that there were no swells' places anywhere in the hills, and that the wood ranger's pasturage was unbroken. The people whom I met were cordial, smiling, unassuming. I liked Ramapos as the result of only a glance, and liked them still better after a camping acquaintance of a couple of weeks.

It certainly did not decrease my interest to know that, beginning some twenty or more years ago, sundry domestic dogs of large size, finding in the Ramapo woods no one to say them nay, had fled from the lowland farms to the hills, and had, after going quite wild, started a breed of creatures which has now taken on quite a type of its own.—New York Mail and Express.



Mrs. Humphrey Ward enjoys the distinction of being paid more for her literary work than any other woman now living or who ever lived.

Marie Corelli is credited with saying: "I read in the papers that Kipling has gone up into Scotland to find material for new stories. The idea of anybody trying to write of Scotch life after Sir Walter Scott!"

Rest, in its ordinary acceptance, is a comparatively unknown quantity in Edward Everett Hale's busy life. Few are the days in the total 365 but what are more or less interlarded with work of some sort or other. True it is not of the laborious order, rather it is of the kind that makes deeper, more insidious inroads—mental, intellectual, spiritual.

Miss Sarah Orne Jewett dearly loves flowers, spending some of the happiest of summer's hours working among them in an old-fashioned garden back of her home. This inherent love of everything wholesome, combined with the laborious order, rather it is of the kind that makes deeper, more insidious inroads—mental, intellectual, spiritual.

"I will not," she exclaimed, "bring home a choice assortment of microbes."

"But you needn't get a long skirt soiled," said the dressmaker. "You hold it up, you know."

"It tries me to hold it up. I want to step out freely."

"Oh," said the dressmaker again. It was her favorite argument, and it was apt to make her opponent wilt without knowing why. She had worked for that particular woman for several years, and had exercised over her a mild but invincible despotism.

"They are all made long," ventured the dressmaker, "except the heavy stitched walking-skirts."

"I don't care!" said the woman. "I will defy fashion!"

"This time the dressmaker's 'Oh!' implied that to defy fashion was to invite death or disgrace. The woman felt herself weakening before the inexorable judgment of the 'one who knows.'"

"You're very tall," said the dressmaker, softly. "And slender," she added, after an effective pause. Her power lay in the fact that she never became excited and never gave way. A vision rose before the woman of her long, thin, lanky self, clad girlishly in a skirt that escaped the ground, with a pair of very substantial feet peeping in and out, like anything rather than "little mice." But pride came to her aid.

"Cut it short!" she ordered, sternly. "I mean," she added, "cut it about half an inch above the ground."

"The edge will cut out and collect dirt," said the dressmaker, sadly.

"Let it!" said the desperate woman.

"It's a light material, easily held up."

The tone grew more melancholy, as if the dressmaker were fighting with adverse fate.

The woman was at bay. "I'll have it short!" she snapped, and the dressmaker relapsed into silence and depression.

When the skirt was nearly finished she tried it on with a look of mute despair. "The circular founce is only based on," the dressmaker said, finally. "It—It can be let down."

"What's all this length of stuff under the founce?" asked the owner of the skirt.

"Well, I didn't cut it off, you know. The founce can be let down. I thought you might change your mind."

"It looks very straight up and down."

"Yes; if you have it long it will fare out better. You're so tall and slender."

"Let it down!" suddenly exclaimed the woman in the tone of a general who orders a retreat.

"Very well," said the dressmaker, as meekly as if she were assenting to an act of self-sacrifice.

A Persian Parable.

There was a certain man who thought the world was growing worse. He was always harking back to "the good old times," and was sure that the human race was degenerating. Men, he said, were all trying to cheat one another; the strong were crushing the weak.

One day when he was sitting his pessimistic views, the call said to him: "Charge you hereafter to look carefully about you, and whenever you see any man do a worthy deed to see

ACTRESS DUSE'S VENETIAN PALACE.



Signora Eleonora Duse, the great Italian actress, differs from many of her associates in at least one respect—she does not seek publicity. To be sure, her managers, especially when she is on an American tour, use every legitimate effort to keep her before the public, and D'Annunzio's book, which reflected so little credit upon its author, brought her name into prominence in a somewhat regretful way, but this was not the fault of the actress. She belongs, in a sense, to the public when she is on the stage. Her home life is her own. It is not the "home" life of hotels that Signora Duse is happy in, but rather in the home life of her ancient palace, on the Grand Canal in Venice. Her palace, which is the center building of the three buildings shown in the picture, is one of those quiet old structures which have made Venice an architectural delight. It is not as pretentious as some of its neighbors, but, nevertheless, through its great age and its architectural beauties it is one of the show places of Venice. When it was built no one seems occupied by one of the noble families of Venice is established. Here, surrounded by all the comforts of a practical age, Signora Duse spends the happiest months of her life. A quiet life it is, apart from the glare of the footlights and the tinsel of the stage. She entertains, but on a modest scale. Privileged, indeed, are the few who have access to her delightful home.

AN IGNOMINIOUS RETREAT.

The Determined Woman Met Her Match in Her Dressmaker.

Most persons who attempt to emancipate themselves from established custom have periods of falling back into the old way again, baffled reformers. The real reformers are those who persist. The New York Tribune tells a story in which a woman who thought she had conquered was, after all, defeated. She considered herself a strong-minded woman, and had determined that she would have no more trailing skirts. She told her dressmaker of her decision in a tone which seemed to her not to admit of question or protest; but she did not know that the dressmaker, too, was a strong-minded woman, though in a different way.

"Oh," said the dressmaker, in a tone of mild perplexity. There was so much behind that "Oh" that the woman felt moved to assert herself.

"I will not," she exclaimed, "bring home a choice assortment of microbes."

"But you needn't get a long skirt soiled," said the dressmaker. "You hold it up, you know."

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OLD FAVORITES

My Ain Countrie.

I am far frae my hame, an' I'm weary
atfentwiles,
For the langed for hame-bringing, an' my
Father's welcome smiles
I'll ne'er be fu' content until mine een
do see
The golden gates o' heaven, an' my ain
countrie.

The earth is flecked wi' flowers, mony-
tated, fresh, an' gay,
The birds warble blithely, for my
Father made them sae;
But these sights an' these sounds will be
naething to me
When I hear the angels singing in my ain
countrie.

I've his gude word of promise, that some
gladness day the King
To his ain royal palace his banished hame
will bring
Wi' 'een an' wi' hearts runnin' o'er, we
shall see
The King in his beauty, an' our ain
countrie.

My sins ha' been mony, an' my sorrows
ha' been sair,
But there they'll ne'er mair vex me, ne'er
remembered mair,
Mis blind hath made me white, His hand
shall dry mine ee,
When He brings me hame at last to my
ain countrie.

Like a bairn to its mither, a wee birdie
to its nest;
I wad fain be gangin' noo to my
Father's breast;
For he gathers in His bosom wittles,
weathless lambs like me,
And He carries them himself to his ain
countrie.

He's faithful, that hath promised; He'll
surely come again;
He'll keep his trust wi' me, at what hour
I donna ken;
But He bids me still to watch, an' ready
my ee to be
To gang at any moment to my ain
countrie.

So I'm watching awa, an' singin' o' my
hame as I wait,
For the sun'll o' His footie's this side
the golden gate,
God gie His grace to lika me wha' listens
noo to me,
That we'll see may gang in gladness to our
ain countrie.
—Mary Lee Demarest.

Long, Long Ago.

Tell me the tale that to me weep sae dear,
Long long ago, long long ago;
Sing me the songs I delighted to hear,
Long long ago, long long ago.
Now you are come all my grief is re-
mov'd.

Let me forget that so long you have rovd,
Let me believe that you love as you lov'd,
Long long ago, long ago.

Do you remember the path where we met,
Long long ago, long long ago?
Ah, yes, you told me you ne'er would
forget.

Long long ago, long long ago,
Then to all others my smile you prefer'd,
Love when you spoke gave a charm to
each word,
Still my heart treasures the praises I
heard.

Long long ago, long ago,
Though by kindness my fond hopes were
rais'd,
Long long ago, long long ago,
You by more eloquent lips have been
prais'd.

Long long ago, long long ago;
But by long absence your truth has been
tried,
Still to your accents I listen with pride,
Bliss as I was when I sat by your side,
Long long ago, long ago.

The "Lounge Game."

The "lounge game" has been played
at least once in Brooklyn and twice in
New York; perhaps oftener, but these
are the only cases the police have
heard of. The mode of operation is
like this: A wagon drives up to a
house, and one of the two men in
charge rings the door bell and says:

"We have a sofa here bought by Mr.
A., who ordered it sent up."

"But Mr. A. has ordered no sofa,"
the lady of the house responds. "There
is some mistake."

"Not a bit of it; he bought it and
paid for it, and all we can do is to
leave it."

The lady is not convinced, but she is
asked to play nothing, can make no
reasonable objection, so in comes the
lounge, that is usually taken to a
second floor. In a couple of hours, back
come the men. All a mistake; was
meant for another man of the same
name, at the other end of the town.

The furniture is placed again in the
wagon, and carried away. Some time
later the lady of the house misses her
jewelry and other small valuables. She
cannot imagine where they have gone
to. The men with the wagon know.

There was a hollow place in the
lounge, large enough to hold a small
man, and store away a lot of clothing,
knick-knacks and jewelry. The goods
had gone away with the lounge.

Overreached.

"Yes, Merchant's scheme was to dis-
play his goods in his window with a lot
of mirrors back of them, so that all
the women passing would be sure to
step and look in."

"Pretty-foxy idea, eh?"

"Yes, but it failed. None of the
women, looked at anything but the
mirrors."—London (Ont.) Advertiser.

Fruit Trees in Germany.

A census has recently been taken of
Germany's fruit trees. There are 800
fruit trees to every square mile of terri-
tory in the German Empire, in the fol-
lowing proportions: Plum, 332; apple,
263; pear, 136; and cherry, 104. There
are about three trees to every inhabit-
ant.

Grass Houses in Oklahoma.

Among the most interesting features
of Southern Oklahoma are the remains
of the grass houses formerly built by
the Wichita Indians, who, to a certain
extent, kept up their novel mode of ar-
chitecture to the present day.