

THE PLAINS OF YUHA

SOME OF THE CURIOSITIES OF THE COLORADO DESERT.

Graves Each of Which Tells a Story of a Tragedy of Heat, Thirst and Death—Odd Stones and Shells That Strew the Barren Region.

There is a section of the Colorado desert where nature has left some remarkable records. She has visited the region alternately with fire and water and has left it with neither. It is the most desolate, wild, barren, forbidding part of the desert, says the Los Angeles Times, and it is shunned like by man and beast. That there is good and sufficient reason for avoiding this locality is attested by numbers of graves, nameless for the most part, found in the terrible region.

These graves are simple affairs, merely mounds of earth with a border of stones about each and a pile of rocks two or three feet high at the head. Each tells the story of a tragedy of heat, thirst and death. Those items are about all that is ever known of the stories of those who perish. Their mummified bodies or bleached bones are found long after the struggle is over, and the finder, respecting the memory of the unknown, scoops a hole in the earth, lays the ghastly relic within and piles up the only monument available in that wild region.

The plain now lies nearly a hundred feet below the level of the sea, and the rocks of the plain and the bases of the mountains are washed and eroded in a wonderful manner. Mingling with the burnt stones and volcanic debris are rocks worn by the waves and shaped into hundreds of fantastic forms. There are many acres of these stone curiosities, and certain sections of the field seem devoted to certain shapes and figures.

For instance, one passes through a region which he at once names the cabbage patch, for it presents the appearance of a field of those vegetables which have turned to stone. The waves have worn the rocks into round boulders about the size of the vegetable which they so much resemble and have cut into the globes, laminating them in perfect imitation of the leafy layers of the garden vegetable.

Another locality is devoted almost exclusively to dinner plates. Thousands of rounded, thin disks are scattered over the plain or are piled scores deep in singular piles, each piece shaped exactly like the crockery which adorns our tables and quite as thin and symmetrical.

Another section of this truly wonderful region is given almost wholly to dumbbells. These vary in size from pieces weighing one or two pounds up to those seemingly calculated for exercising the muscles of a giant and weighing thirty or forty pounds each. In almost every instance these natural dumbbells are well balanced, the balls at either end of the connecting piece being of the same size and weight.

There is in this plain a personal also. While guns and swords and bayonets and powder were not there to be found, there are thousands of cannon balls varying in size from two and three inch balls to those fit for the big thirteen inch guns of modern warfare. And all are of stone, all formed in nature's workshop.

There are other objects innumerable. There are stone roses, stone lilies, stone tulips, stone leaves, stone birds, stone animals, stone quilts, stone ornaments in varied and unique designs, stone canes—in fact, almost everything conceivable in nature or art imitated in stone on the plain of Yuha.

In one portion of Yuha rise two hills or small mountains. One might mistake them in the distance for ancient craters, but when he approaches the eminences he discovers them to be monuments to an ancient life—the records of species now extinct. They are shell mountains, great beds of prehistoric bivalves which were left stranded when that ancient sea swept back from the region and left a dry and desolate land.

One of these mountains, the large one, is composed wholly of large rough shells, much larger, but less elongated, than the shells of the modern oyster, which in some respects they so much resemble as to lead to the suspicion that they are the remains of the ancestors of our much prized bivalve.

The lesser hill is composed of tiny shells of a prehistoric type of brachiopoda. Like the larger shells, they are found except on the surface in an undisturbed state, both valves of nearly every shell being found in position. Although the mollusk dwellers of these shells vanished several centuries ago, so perfect are the shells one almost expects when he opens the valve of the shell to find the living creature within.

Retribution.

Millions of years had passed. Birds had succeeded to the supremacy formerly held by man.

"What is that you are wearing on your hat?" asked the flamingo.

"It's the scalp of an almost extinct biped called a woman," replied the egret. "A few specimens of the creature still exist, I am told, in the inaccessible fastnesses of the everglades."

—Chicago Tribune.

ARBOREAL COURTSHIP.

Antics of the Rooks When the Mating Season Begins.

"It is always amusing to watch the rooks in the period of their courtship," says an English writer. "When the male bird first begins to seek a mate the fact is soon made known to the world at large by a curious hoarsening of his voice. There is no accounting for tastes, according to an old proverb, and to the female rook there is no music equal to the hoarseness that her lord begins to show about the middle of January. Then begin the violent tournaments of which she is a passive spectator. The two claimants for her favor often begin pecking at one another at the very tops of the trees, and as in the fury of their onslaught they lose foothold they drop and drop and drop till they bump against the ground, often at the very feet of some human onlooker who has been watching their proceedings with interested curiosity. Darwin tells us of similar incidents in the life history of deer and cites as somewhat of an argument against the doctrine of the survival of the fittest that while two lordly and robust stags are fighting for the hind it will often happen that a timid and feeble third stag will come in and carry off the prize.

"But no such capriciousness as that is allowed the female rook. Probably before the battle begins he who aspires to be her future lord and master has selected the home in which they are to live, and should any other rook attempt to share it with her he will fight him to the death. In this case the survival of the fittest is insured.

"When once they are mated the rooks seem to stick together and be subject to little further molestation, though occasionally, I think, a gay Lothario will attempt to make love where he ought not to. But in that case the whole colony of rooks unite against him and peck and beat him with their wings till he is at the point of death."

WHY INDIANS PAINT.

An Apache Legend Which Accounts For the Grotesque Custom.

Once an old Apache Indian, when asked the question why the people painted their faces, told this little legend:

"Long ago, when men were weak and animals were big and strong, a chief of the red men who lived in these mountains went out to get a deer, for his people were hungry.

"After walking all day he saw a deer and shot at it, but the arrow was turned aside and wounded a mountain lion, which was also after the deer. When the lion felt the sting of the arrow he jumped up and bounded after the man, who ran for his life.

"He was almost exhausted, and when he felt his strength giving way he fell to the ground, calling on the big bear, who, you know, is the grandfather of men, to save him.

"The big bear heard the call and saw that to save the man he had to act quickly, so he scratched his foot and sprinkled his blood over the man.

"Now, you know that no animal will eat of the bear or taste of his blood. So when the lion approached the man he smelled of the blood and turned away, but as he did so his foot scraped the face of the man, leaving the marks of his claws on the blood smeared face.

"When the man found that he was unharmed he was so thankful that he left the blood to dry on his face and never washed it at all, but left it until it peeled off.

"Where the claws of the lion scraped it off there were marks that turned brown in the sun, and where the blood stayed on it was lighter. Now all men paint their faces that way with blood and scrape it off in streaks when they hunt or go to war."

HINTS FOR FARMERS

Feeding a Foal on Cow's Milk.

Some time ago I had a young grade coach mare in foal to a German coach stallion. Before the time for foaling she had an attack of disease, from the effects of which she became much run down and poor, writes a correspondent of American Cultivator. The foal appeared all right on being dropped, but as the dam gave but very little milk it made but little growth and was thin and poor.

When two months old, somewhere about the commencement of autumn, it was taken from the mother and put in the barn, where it was fed with fresh green grass. Having a dairy and a separator, the colt was taught to drink the skimmed milk while sweet and warm. It soon became fond of the milk and commenced to grow and fill out. It was kept in a roomy pen all through the winter and given the skimmed milk along with its other feed. As a result it grew finely, became round, smooth coated and handsome, in great contrast with the poor, small, half starved animal at the beginning. By spring there was not a finer looking colt around and it attracted much attention on this account. Where autumn colts are raised the skimmed milk diet might be of advantage along with the other feed.

Decline in Birthrate.

Washington, Aug 16—"That there has been a persistent decline of the birthrate in the United States since 1860," is the conclusion reached in a bulletin issued by the Census Bureau. The bulletin was prepared by Prof. Walter F. Wilcox, of Cornell University, and it is explained that, although an analysis made offers many suggestions as to the probable tendencies in the birth-rate of the United States, it is primarily not a study in birth-rates but a study in the proportion of children to the total population, or total number of women of child-bearing age.

The result of the study shows that at the beginning of the nineteenth century, the children under ten year of age constituted one-third and at the end less than one-fourth of the total population. The decrease in this proportion began as early as the decade 1810 to 1820 and continued uninterruptedly, though at varying rates in each successive decade. Between 1850 and 1860, the proportion of children to women between 15 and 49 years, the child-bearing age, increased, but since 1860 it has constantly decreased. It is stated that the decrease has been unequal from decade to decade, but that, if the computation is made upon the basis of 20-year periods, it has been regular. In 1860 the number of children under five years of age to 1000 women 15 to 49 years of age was 634; in 1900 it was only 474. The proportion of children to potential mothers in 1900 was only three-fourths as large as in 1860.

Everybody wants to know what The Oregonian has to say. Always reliable—The Weekly Oregonian.

Public is Aroused

The public is aroused to a knowledge of the curative merits of that great medicinal tonic, Electric Bitters, for sick stomach, liver and kidneys. Mary H. Walters, of 546 St. Clair Ave., Columbus, O., writes: "For several months, I was given up to die. I had fever and ague, my nerves were wrecked; I could not sleep, and my stomach was so weak from useless doctor's drugs, that I could not eat. Soon after beginning to take Electric Bitters, I obtained relief, and in a short time I was entirely cured." Guaranteed at Slocum's drug store; price 50c.

Twenty-five ships now loading off Aberdeen, Wash., will carry from that port 17,500,000 feet of lumber.

Thirty five cases of typhoid fever have developed in Seattle during the past two weeks and more are on the way.

The State university will open this year September 27. It is expected the attendance will exceed that of any previous year.

The new Portland fireboat works 3175 feet of hose with a pressure of 250 pounds. The crew numbers 18 men, and W. M. Smith is captain.

A Touching Story.

is the saving from death, of the baby girl of Geo. A. Eyer, Cumberland, Md. He writes: "At the age of 11 months, our little girl was in declining health, with serious Throat Trouble, and two physicians gave her up. We were almost in despair, when we resolved to try Dr. King's New Discovery for Consumption, Coughs and Colds. The first bottle gave relief; after taking four bottles she was cured, and is now in perfect health." Never fails to relieve and cure a cough or cold. At Slocum Drug Co.'s drug store; 50c and \$1 guaranteed. Trial bottle free.

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SAN FRANCISCO PORTLAND ROUTE. Steamers sail from Portland 8 p. m. every 5 days.

Boat service between Portland, Astoria, Oregon City, Dayton, Salem, Independence, Corvallis and all Columbia and Willamette River points.

SNAKE RIVER ROUTE.

Steamers between Riparia and Lewiston leave Riparia daily at 10:40 a. m. except Saturday, returning leave Lewiston daily at 7 a. m. except Friday.

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