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CHAPTER L THE OREGON "DESERT."

From the north boundary line to f territory about 400 miles long and shout 200 miles wide, which was note 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 touched the 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

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. is at a high altitude at every point, To reach it from most any direction one must climb a great mountain range, and meander 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, whether passing through small basin or a great plateau, is struck with same impression. A wall surrounds each of these baplateaus and sepa OF These from another. walls consist of rocks piled upon one mother with masonic care, the joints being broken as perfectly and smooth ly as if done by skilled human hands and they rise perpendicularly from ten to two thousand feet into the air, and to make them the more difficult of ascent, a thick layer of flat rocks lie along the top of the wall extending out on either side into wide eaves and sheltering them like the rim of a hat. or the eaves of a flat roof, and these

While they appear to be a success sion of plateaus, independent of one nowise connected another, and in whereby one might scale the walls which separate them, yet, with seldom an exception, nature has come to the rescue, and by the same process through which the great upheavis were caused and these mountains of lava rocks and plains of volcanic formed, serpentinewere shaped canyons and gulches had rent the walls, and through these the traveler may find his way from one basin to another.

are called the rimrocks.

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 the watchful Indians came upon them. let, would charge down upon the encased animals and slaughter a whole band. And these animals were not 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, together with the care of their jaded mimals, reduced to mere skeletons the flinty rocks, without feed or water, while passing through these came under a shower of poisoned arrews 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 or the gallows, but the marauding chiefs, Egan and Paulina, knew no bounds of territory and knew no limit for crime and bloodshed. The beaks, 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 flocked. Horses and cattle were plentiful, and wild game, look occupies his countenance, and from the monarch grizzly to the common jackrabbit, including elk. deer. entelope, mountain sheep, mountain liens, cougar, coyote, wildcat and marten roamed at will, and were seldom ever disturbed by the hand of man. The flesh of the game animals the tenderest and best, while Was section the furs produced in this here considered the best in the mar-

It was the paradise of the hunter and trapper.

CHAPTER II.

THE LORD OF THE DESERT. plateaus containing hundreds of is a book, but the thumb only marks thousands of acres of land, is a low found 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 runty evergreen of the juniper species, from which the mounhe south boundary line of the state, tain takes its name, while the summit the south boundary line of the state, and east and north and west sides barren, and huge boulders lie are 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 A fence of barbed wire attucked 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 juni-pers, is a large single-story house. tuilt 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 nothing happens to prevent it," retempered for the tender roots of the young vegetation.

The grounds about the house, in cluding orchard, garden, stables and cowsheds, 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



He sat in a high-bached home-made

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 all makes hang in the racks over doors and about the walls. Large to revolvers swing from points here and there like ornaments, while numerous unrieties of this deadly weapon adorn the tables in the room.

In the main bedroom this same 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 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 batchelor's quarters, while the dining-room and kitchen are large sands and drawing heavy loads over the flitter and spacious, and a large supply of a large number for an indefinite pe-The front bedroom. like the canyons and beneath the rimrocks, kitchen and dining-room, is kept in perfect order. These and the room are frequently visited and occupled 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 apartments, 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-ofall-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 in a peculiarly-constructed chair in deep meditation. An anxious 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 homemade affair. It has huge posts and a high back, with long, awkwardly-constructed rockers that give it the ap- in. pearance 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 one of these hand of the man occupying the chair hundreds of is a book, but the thumb only marks

table, or arm of the chair, sits a goolet half-filled with old Scotch whiskey. the right hand clasping it gently. Al though 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 battling 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 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, the inevitable markers of time, and the solid grey that inter-mingles 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 soblet to relieve the terrors of his soul. which were depicted in his face.

CHAPTER III.

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

"Oh, in the very best of spirits," re-plied 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.

plied the man. "But nothing can happen to prevent except an extraordinary event, can inquired the girl assuringly. 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

"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

"Oh, then are we to pass through dangerous section?" inquired th 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." in quired 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, Mad-am, and you must be a nervy girl to ambush. have crossed the ocean and come this for alone, the Snakes I speak of are ladians, belonging to the tribe of Plutes called Snakes for the very rea son 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 of the outer doors stand the latest nanufacture of rifles, and guns of stealing and horse stealing is their 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 most of them. As it is getting late and we wish an early start in the abundance of firearms exist, and in 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 as the young woman walked away to her tent, Dan Follett muttered to himself: "A nretty fair flower to be plucked by the

(To be Continued.)

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 laughingly 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 three three feet deep, so she had done it for a joke, and she turned round and threw water in the faces of it was a war, and the men fought like

her pursuers. The princess had seen the joke directly after the cry had escaped her, and now joined heartly in the fun, and urged others to help in the capture. The general harem dress when warm weather set in was white Indian grass-cloth, more or less fine, 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 bair.

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

There was nothing but screaming and laughing, several disporting themselves & the water, others pursued all over the garden, met at the crosspaths, turning and doubling on their pursuers. The princess clapped her



CHAPTER III-Continued.

Bertha Lyle had come all the way from Scotland to look after an estate supposed to have been left her by ber father. He and a brother had come to America eighteen years before, when she was a mere child. At the age of two years she had lost her mother, and her father had placed her in school and come to America drown his troubles and make his for-Before he had been here ten years the report came that he had been killed by Indians. This was shortly after the report that he and his brother had inherited an immense fortune from a brother in New York, and while neither Bertha nor friends could ever get any information concerning what became of this fortune, her uncle in America had supplied her with plenty of funds complete her education and meet all her wants. He wrote her that they had invested their inheritances to gether in American property and that the speculation had proved a failure, and that while her father had left asabove his liabilities there was nothing to speak of coming to her. Out of pure benevolence however, he uncle would see that his niece should not suffer for the necessaries of life.

Economizing the funds he had sent her from time to time until her sav-ings amounted to considerable she started for America, not informing her uncle of her coming until she reached New York City, from which place she wrote him of the probable date that she would reach Boise City Army Post.

Reaching the latter place she grev impatient waiting the arrival of an escort from her uncle and started with



s pack train for the interior. On the night in which the converstion at the beginning of this chapter opened, the pack train had reached a point on Snake river on the Old Oregon Trail near the Oregon and Idaho line. Fortunately, on the same night, the escort consisting of cowboys, sent out under the leadership of an expert frontiersman, met her at this place.

Both parties had camped in a small valley near the river, surrounded by mountains, covered with rocks and boulders. The pack train consisted of thirty mules and two wagons, while the escort consisted of ten men, besides its leader and a dozen horses. one of which was used exclusively for a pack horse, and another was brought along for Bertha to ride.

Tired and worn out by the hardmembers of the escort, while not so started for the Stone House, fatigued, had prepared for retiring early also, partly to keep from disturbing their neighbors and partly to be refreshed for the following day's journey, for from this point the pack train would continue to the west and Bertha and her escort would take a course over the trailless plains and mountains to the south. After she had retired to a bed of

straw, this girl from a comfortable home in Scotland had plenty to think about before she fell asleep. This barren plains and mountains over which she nad passed during the past few days, and the trackless desert be fore her looked gloomy enough, but the probable attack from Indians and a long trip through a bar ren country to her destination were calculated to increase her anxiety. while the reference of the leader of and the same tribe who, it was alleged, had murdered her father thickened the mantle of gloom that hung about her, and besides, she did not .ike the appearance of the man under whose charge she had fallen. man's intuition had properly aroused her suspicions on this point.

How long she had been asleep she did not know when awakened by the florcest yells that had ever pierced her ears, and these intermingled with the discharging of firearms and a din of oaths and shouts as if a thousand demons were engaged in war. demons! The packers and cowboys, though outnumbered five to one, stood their ground until the struggle became a hand to hand one, and not until she had been snatched from her bed and dragged a short distance and band, bound on the back of a horse, and was being rushed out through a deep canyen in the mountains, surrounded by band of Indian warriors, each seem ingly claiming her as his prize, did she fully realize that her people had lost and that the red skins had won. It was fortunate for Bertha that she did not remove her clothing upon retiring that night, and that she placed

that altitude even penetrated these. CAPTER IV.

her shoes on her feet upon being first

awakened, for the chill night air of

The Chase

The following morning showed the effects of the Indian raid. Two of the packers lay dead upon the ground, they formed, their scalps taken, while one of the escort had been killed, and three morremained in the vicinity. These, an they had abandoned the chase.

But as soon as they had abandoned the chase. important object of the attack, had But as soon as they were fairly been driven away and treasured more hidden behind the rimrocks at the

highly even, than the fair captive, had taken, for stock of they all kinds was scarce with them. They had been forced into the rimrocks and lava beds by the United States diers, and the scanty vegetation there had caused their animals to disappear almost as rapidly as the pangs of hunger, which prompted the decaying race in butchering and eating them.
While viewing the band of fat mules and horses from the crevices of the rimrocks the previous evening, the eagle eyes of old Egan, the chief, saw Bertha Lyle in the camp and she was quench their thirst, they pitched a indeed a rare picture in this section temporary camp and waited. of country, and especially so after the proposition that had come from the lips of Martin Lyle, the Lord of The Desert. As it were, it was the killing of two birds with one stone with the chief. It was the obtaining of animals for his hungry and hard beset tribe and obtaining a prize of far more personal value which meant more wealth for his tribe and a white squaw for his wigwam,

After the surprise of the attack of the previous night the men railled to defend the camp. But it was too late. the work was done. While the main body of the red men had charged on the camp, detachments of the party had not been idle. They corralled the horses and had them on the road. ready to join the main band with their captive. They disappeared as silently as they came and the handful whites that still survived knew that it was useless to follow them in the dark. besides, they did not know but that a redskin lurked behind every boulder on the mountain sides,

They had spent the remainder of the night in ministering to the wounded, and preparing the dead for burtal They were in a predicament indeed. They had neither horses to pursue the marauding band of Indians, or to continue their journey. While some of the members of the party aroused the fate of the white girl. were willing and anxious to pur-sue the Indians on foot, all all the futility of such an attempt and the leader of the escort showed no concern about her capture and no inclination to follow her captors, but rather cursed the fate of being left afoot. The morning was consumed in burying the dead and the afternoon in reconnoitering. The trail of the In-dians was discovered, which showed that they had gone in a southerly direction, a course that led to the east of the stone house, on Mount Juniper, Fortunately, that night another pack

train arrived from the west. It had a few surplus horses, and as these men of pioneer days were always will ing to lend a helping hand to the distressed, they supplied the strander party with a few horses. The strand ed packers returned with this train to Fort Boise, while four members of the escort with the daring equal to those times, and against the admoni tion of their leader, entered into a solemn oath that they would follow Indians and would never return until they had recaptured Bertha Lyle and placed her in the stone house with her uncle. Early the following morning, armed and provisioned mounted these four started out on the trail of the bandit Indians. packers moved on, taking the wound-ed cowboys with them, all of whom ships of the trail, the packers had ed cowboys with them, all of whom hobbled out their mules, prepared died and were buried at Boise their meal, and gone to bed early. The City. Dan Follett and the others

The four cowboys who went in pur suit of the Indians were familiar with that part of the desert, and being on



Old Eagan saw Bertha iu camp.

comparatively fresh horses made better time than the Indians, so that by the escort to the danger from Indians wight they came to where the red men had stopped to prepare their dinner the same day. Each camping place of the Indians was marked by the carcass of a mule, for hungry as they were, and their party was so large that it required a full grown animal for every meal. Arising bright and early the following morning they soon reached the camp of the Indians of the previous night and came upon the Indians at noon. The latter were conscious of their power and boldly ate their dinner in full view of the whites, and took their time about moving on, shouting out words of deflance as they went,

The brave four were rewarded by see ing Bertha from the rimrocks, still well and unharmed, but it was with a shudder that they beheld the attention that she received from the leader of the

The Indians numbered about forty warriors and were a set of as ugly victous looking fellows as ever won the unenviable name of their tribe. The whites could do nothing but follow at a distance with the hope that something might transpire by which they would be enabled to re lieve the young woman from her di-lemma. But now that they were dis-covered by the Indians their prospects seemed far less flattering than when they first started out,

Strategem was their only hope. make the Indians believe that they had abandoned the chase and, thus throwing them off their guard, ap-proach the camp by stealth at night and rescue the woman was the plan

So in full view of the Indians they saluted them as if bidding them good

crest of the mountain overlooking the plain in which the Indians had camp ed they turned down a gulch, and continued, cautiously, traveling ia a rection parallel to that taken by the

As already described, travel among the rimrocks is difficult. Openings in the wall are few, and subwalls lead off in many directions. The traveler must needs go a zigzag course and frequently travel many miles out of his course to reach a given point, so that when night came the little pursuing party had lost sight of the objects of its pursuit, and the succession of walls of rimrocks and level plains lay alike in every direction.

There was but one hope and that was when it grew darker to abandon their horses and climb to the top of the highest rimrocks and try to discover the campfires of the marauders. Selecting a spot near where a seep of stagnant water flowed from the rocks, with which they were compelled

As the night grew darker the stars grew brighter and the wild howls of the coyote rang in the distance, interspersed now and then with the weird cry of the hungry mountain lion.

CHAPTER V.

Two Villains.

It is the fourth night after the Indians attacked the pack train. At the Stone House the Lord of The Desert sits at his accustomed place, sipping from a goblet of old Scotch whiskey. Of late years he has done but little besides drink from the flowing bowl, One day he deadens all sense of feeling, to rise the following with a keener appetite and a conscience more stinging. On this night his eyelids are heavier than usual, his eyes look more glassy and the grimaces are deeper in his face,

No wonder. If Dan Follett, the Canadian Frenchman, has followed his instructions and old Egan, the Indian chief, has kept his eyes open and been prompt in action, another crime has been added to his life. He stares into the vacant darkness and this, so still and gloomy on the desert, re-minds him of a distant cave in the rimrocks, and the picture there caused a shudder to come over the great frame of Martin Lyle, the Lord of The

Desert. The welcome bark of the dogs, announces the arrival of one who is not a stranger. In his eagerness, the Lord of The Desert rises and paces the floor, now and then stopping at the arm chair and taking a sip from the goblet. Presently a lank form enters the door. His dark heavy eyebrows, and the natural scowl upon his face, his careless ambling walk, depict the character of the man at a glance. But nothing ever tells the inmost thoughts of Dan Follett. Whether after victory or defeat, or during anger or in a hap-py mood, the oily black eyes of this man never change. It is only when he speaks or acts that his mood is known,

Upon entering the house, and after greeting its Lord, he soon unburdens himself.

"I saw from the smoke above the distant rimrocks the evening before," said Follett, "that old Egan was ready for action, but in spite of my efforts the clash came in a way that several lives of our men were lost. I tried to have the surprise so complete that the girl and animals should be taken away without the loss of a life, but our boys were on their feet instantly and fought bravely, and it was certainly a mir-acle that any of them escaped after they engaged such odds." detailed the circumstances of the fight as the reader knows them.

"Do you think there is any chance of those four dare-devils restuing the girl?" inquired Lyle.

"None in the world," replied the Frenchman. "They will either lose their lives by their foolhardiness or Frenchman. come in in a few days starved out, as I saw to the fact myself that they took but few provisions with them." "How did the girl take her captiv-

ity?" inquired the Lord of The Desert.

"I only saw her for a moment by a flash o the campfire after she was secured, and she wore a bold look of firmness and defiance, as if she feared not even the devils into whose hands she had fallen. "She's a Lyle!" muttered the Lord

of The Desert. "This is a costly affair, Martin," in sinuated Follett.

"Yes, I know," replied the man of ealth, "but old Egan wanted aniwealth. mals for his men and would not do the other work, you know, without the horses as he said his men would not be satisfied with taking the girl alone."

The twenty-five head which I am to deliver at Gray Butte and the forty head they got the other night," said Follett, "are a pretty heavy tax, besides the men we have lost. Better made away with her as I did with her father."

"That would never have done," niled Lyle. "The notoriety of her vis-it here would have led to an investigation, but now that the Indians have done the work it is a natural turn of affairs in this country and the American's—'Uncle Sam,'—will reward Egan and his warriors by giving them a reservation and feeding and educating them. The English would reward the whole gang by hanging them. But enough of this. Tomorrow arrange to deliver the twenty-five cayuses to the old brute, but before you do it require positive proof that he's performed his part of the contract, he has to kill her. you know!"

"And the deed to the Spring Creek Valley," replied Follett, "don't forget that. While Egan must be rewarded for his damnable deeds. I must be paid for my bloody ones!" and he wave the Lord of The Desert a piercing look that made that man of nerve shrink

like a coward. this time Follett's companions came in from attending to the horses and the three repaired to the dining room, while the owner of the Stone House sat down and drank thought, and drawk and thought.

(To be Continued.)