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MIRAGES OF THE DESERT

MOST BEAUTIFUL EFFECTS IN HARNEY VALLEY.

Many Delusions of The Desert of Eastern Oregon—An Apparent Mountain Pass That Changes Position.

The following is clipped from the Lakeview Examiner, but we think the credit is due Paul DeLaney in the Portland Journal:

Many people are under the impression that mirages are only seen on the great desert of Sahara. People of Oregon do not generally know these phenomena are seen on the Oregon "desert." It is a fact, however, and some of the most deceptive and most beautiful effects are seen while crossing the plains of the great Inland Empire. They may be seen on many points on the desert, but they are only known to be mirages in many instances by those who are acquainted with the particular locality. The most common form of mirage on the Oregon desert is the change in the appearance of land marks, both as to shape and distance. The stranger mistakes them for actual conditions while the citizen has long known the land-marks and when the atmospheric conditions change they are quick to detect it and call attention to it. There are also cases of mirages which extraordinary mirages have appeared, and in which the old-time trapper and stockman have been deceived, but they are rare.

Some of the most beautiful effects are seen in Harney Valley. Harney Lake, one of the prettiest bodies of water in the state, will appear one day to be only a few miles distance when in fact it is 20 or more miles away. Mountains change their appearance, and while one day they look to be only a few miles away, on another day they appear many miles distant. Then they change their appearance in shape. A range of mountains lying off to the east of Burns furnishes a diversion in the way of sight-seeing to the citizens. Although the range stretches across the entire Eastern portion of the valley, yet on some occasions they do not seem to be so long as usual, and at times they appear to be cut in two in the middle or at some other point in the range.

"Do you see that wide opening through that range of mountains?" inquired William Hanley, a prominent stockman, near Burns one morning.

"Yes; what of it?" was the answer, for a breach a quarter of a mile wide appeared in the range. The mountains are several hundred feet in altitude at this point, and a breach appeared to be as disconcerting as if it had been chiseled out of the walls at either end were as light as a die and they appeared to be one of Nature's prettiest demonstrations of her work.

There is no opening at all through the mountains there," said Mr. Hanley.

"They are just as solid there as they are to the right and left of the place where there appears to be a breach."

"You are not serious, Mr. Hanley?" was suggested.

"How do you account for it?"

"It's a mirage," replied the stockman.

It was early in the morning and the stranger was requested to look at that way in the afternoon and would be convinced.

It was enough by the middle of the day the breach had disappeared, and the range was once more solid, across the eastern border of the valley. At another time the mirage will appear at another point in the range but the effects are so common that none except those who are familiar with the country would be deceived.

"That it was only a mirage."

"The most beautiful effects are seen at sunrise. At this time one can see many effects, which if one stands, one will see disappear in order as the sun rises and on a different light. Then you will see a mirage appear, and a dis-

ferent effect at sunset, and some most remarkable spectacles have been seen on a clear night. Animals on the desert have appeared to those familiar with them to be of more than ten times their size, and the most experienced have been dumfounded by this phenomenon.

In company with a Lake county trapper I experienced a most remarkable case of the latter kind. We were traveling in a buckboard on the winter range in the mid-desert. The surrounding mountains were all covered with snow, and this as a background gave a peculiar brightness to the light, both by day and night. The section we were in was void of inhabitants. Coyotes, sage hens and antelope were plentiful and I kept up a constant warfare on the sage hens and antelope—that is, when we came close enough to the latter to get a shot.

In making a roundabout trip on the desert in mid-winter we often had to make long drives to reach sheep camps or supply points. The trapper and I had spent several days at the foot of Mount Juniper, nearly 100 miles from the nearest human habitation, in company with two men who had a vast herd of sheep. The trapper had been busy in the canyon and gulches and had a number of coyotes, wildcat and martin holes as a result, while I had been busy supplying the camp with sage hens, and had brought down one antelope.

From Camp Juniper we started early one morning for Windy Hollow, a distance of 50 miles. The roads were rough. At one point the trail lay through a wide stretch of lava beds and we were several hours making the distance of five miles. It was known that we were in a great antelope country, but luck had been against us during the day and we had not seen one of those much coveted animals, though signs were abundant. Night came on while we were still several miles from our destination, but we were compelled to drive on in order to obtain water for ourselves and the horses.

It must have been at least ten o'clock. The stars were shining brightly and the clear, crisp, cold evening gave everything an exaggerated appearance and made the slightest noise sound much louder than under ordinary circumstances. The myraid of coyotes that were following and howling in the distance sounded like a thousand demons.

We had driven some distance in silence, each carrying a repeating rifle across his lap from force of habit while in that country. Suddenly the horses shied, and the trapper, who was driving, threw the brake and drew the reins. At the same time he nudged me in the side and said in a low breath: "Antelope!"

We had been watching for them all day and I immediately scanned the country about us. But I was kept searching for them but an instant. To the left, and on my side of the vehicle, a great band of animals stood, not over 40 yards away, and they were moving restlessly about and nodding their heads up or down, just as antelopes do. I raised my rifle and took aim at the nearest one. Just as I was about to pull the trigger, the trapper stopped me.

"Don't shoot yet!" he said in a whisper, "there may be a mistake. It might be sheep. Step down to the ground and walk toward them until you get closer—they won't run at night."

I cased down from the most greatly disappointed, for I was positive they were antelope, and walked a few steps toward them and again raised my gun to my shoulder. Just as I was ready to pull the trigger, again came the warning from the trapper: "Don't shoot unless you are certain."

"I am sure," I replied.

"Then let 'em have it," he commanded in a louder tone.

I raised the gun to my shoulder again, and as I did so the long line of animals disappeared as suddenly as though the earth had swallowed them up. I looked up at the firm-

per and I saw from his silence and steadfast gaze in the direction where the animals had first appeared that he, too, was surprised.

But in a minute the animals had appeared again, though a little farther away, just as large and numerous as ever.

"Now, shoot!" hissed the trapper. I again raised my gun and the objects disappeared as completely as before. Two or three times they did this in succession.

"Go nearer to them," said the trapper.

Holding the gun ready for action I started in a cautious walk toward the point where the animals were last seen. I walked for 100 yards and there was nothing in view except the level plain which lay out in front of me for miles. I was about to turn back when I stumbled into a large bunch of sage grass. As I did this a sage hen rose and sailed away, and another and another followed until a great flock had taken its flight.

It was a puzzler to the trapper, who had spent his life on the plains, but we were compelled to admit that our antelope were no more nor less than a flock of the plain birds. And the horses had been as badly fooled as we, for we had driven through large flocks of sage hens during the day and they had never noticed them until they appeared in the spectre-like form of antelope that night.

"It was only a mirage," said the trapper, after we had driven some distance in silence.

HIS FRIENDSHIP FOR REVENUE ONLY.

J. B. Huntington Shows up in a Very Bad Light—No Prosecution.

For revenue only appears to be the friendship of J. B. Huntington, a former newspaper man residing on the East Side, for Charles Nebergall, a virtu musician, says the Portland Journal.

Nebergall is about 25 years of age and for some time Multnomah county has been allowing him \$10 per month. This music Nebergall uses in the study of music, the commissioners making this donation with the hope that within a few months the unfortunate man will be able to support himself by the revenues resulting from his playing.

Huntington has been in the habit of accompanying the blind man on his monthly visits to the treasurer's office and is well known to the haugers on and employes at the court house.

Now, it is alleged, Huntington has been borrowing money, declaring he wanted it for the blind man and that Nebergall would return the money when the blind man received his warrant from the county. Some \$15 was secured in this manner, but it appears the sightless one did not receive a cent from Huntington and the lenders made an investigation.

William Wadhams, a merchant, who gave Huntington \$10, said the

matter had been amicably adjusted and the ex-newspaper man had returned the money borrowed from him.

"There will be no prosecution of Huntington," said Mr. Wadhams to a reporter of the Journal.

But those who donate to the blind musician will be more careful in future.

FARMERS SWINDLED.

The farmers of Umatilla county are being swindled by several enterprising men who represent themselves as being in the employ of one or another of the wholesale grocery firms of Portland, says the East Oregonian.

The men represent to the farmers that they are agents of some firm in Portland, which is desiring of enlarging its Eastern Oregon trade and by buying their groceries from them they can get their supplies at wholesale prices and save the retailer's profits.

As a matter of fact, there are but five bona fide wholesale grocery firms in Portland, namely, Lang & Co., Allen & Lewis, Mason, Ehrman & Co., Wadhams & Kerr Bros., and Wadhams & Co., and these firms absolutely refuse to sell to the retail trade under any consideration. The fact is that these men in the country take orders of the farmers and then buy of the wholesalers in wholesale lots, that they make a good profit on their investment is shown by the following illustration.

A farmer's wife in the vicinity of Pendleton, bought 50 pounds of Mountain Java coffee at 35 cents a pound, the men claiming that to be the wholesale price at Portland. Had the lady come to Pendleton she could have bought the same coffee in one pound lots for 25 cents a pound or in bulk at from 18 to 20 cents, thereby saving from \$5 to \$7.50. The people are warned to investigate before buying.

ESTRAYED.

One red line-backed yearling heifer branded H. S. connected on right hip, no ear marks. A suitable reward will be given for her return or information leading to her whereabouts.

Harry C. Smith.

Religious Services.

Services at Christian Science Hall every Sunday at 11 a. m. and 8 p. m. Service Wednesday evenings at 8. Subject for Sunday, May 24, "Ancient and Modern Necromancy; or, Mesmerism and Hypnotism."

Rev. A. J. Irwin will preach at Harney the 2nd Sunday of each month at 11 a. m. and 7:30 p. m. Sabbath school every sabbath at 2 p. m.

Sunday school at Harney the first Sunday of each month at 10 o'clock a. m. On the second, third and fourth Sunday of each month at 3 o'clock p. m. Preaching ser-

vice every second Sunday at 8 p. m.

At the Presbyterian church Burns, Rev. A. J. Irwin pastor. Divine services the third and fourth Sundays of each month at 11 a. m. and 7:30 p. m. Sabbath school at 10 a. m. every Sabbath morning.

Preaching services at the Baptist church every 1st and 2nd Sundays, morning and evening Sunday school every Sunday at 11 a. m. prayer meeting every Thursday evening.

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Who, by her brightness, led her
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—Mrs. J. L. Young, Kansas.