LORD OF THE DESERT

By PAUL DE LANEY.

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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 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 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 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 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 masonic care, the joints being broken as perfectly and smoothly 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 are called the rimrocks.

While they appear to be a succession of plateaus, independent of one another, and in nowise connected 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 upheavels were caused and these mountains of lava rocks and plains of volcanic ashes were formed, serpentine-shaped canyons and gulches had rent the walls, 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 the watchful Indians came upon them, and guarding the only places of outlet, would charge down upon the encaged 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, together with the care of their jaded animals, reduced to mere skeletons from plodding through the burning sands and drawing heavy loads over the flinty 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 bounds of territory and knew no limit for crime 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 flocked. Horses and cattle were plentiful, and wild game, from the monarch grizzly to the common jackrabbit, including elk, deer, antelope, mountain sheep, mountain lions, cougar, coyote, wildcat and marten roamed at will, and were seldom ever 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 runty evergreen of the juniper species, from which the mountain takes its name, while the summit and east and north and west sides are barren, 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 attached 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, hayracks, 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 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 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 manufacture of rifles, and guns of all makes hang in the racks over the doors and about the walls. Large revolvers swing from points here and there like ornaments, while numerous

He sat in a high-backed home-made chair.

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 batchelor'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 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-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 in 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 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 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, the inevitable markers of time, 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 assuringly, 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 nervy girl to 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 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 as the young woman walked away to her tent, Dan Follett muttered to himself: "A pretty fair flower to be plucked by the Piutes!"

(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 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 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 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 disporting themselves in the water, others pursued all over the garden, met at the cross-paths, 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 no cheaper yet, and do not sparkle galore on every fair bosom.

A PRETTY POSTMISTRESS NARROWLY ESCAPES DEATH

Was Given Up to Die—Eight Doctors Failed—Pe-ru-na Saved Her Life.

ALMA L. COX

Thousands of women suffer from systemic catarrh. This is sure to produce such symptoms as cold feet and hands, sick headache, palpitation of the heart and heavy feelings in the stomach.

Then begins a series of experiments with medicine. They take medicine for sick headache. They take medicine for nervous prostration, for palpitation of the heart, for dyspepsia. None of these medicines do any good because they do not reach the cause of the complaint.

Peruna at once mitigates all these symptoms by removing the cause.

Systemic catarrh is the trouble. Systemic catarrh pervades the whole system, deranges every organ, weakens every function. No permanent cure can be expected until the systemic catarrh is removed.

This is exactly what Peruna will do.

Miss Alma Cox, assistant postmistress of Orum, S. C., writes:

"I have been a great sufferer from chronic disease and dyspepsia for five years. How I suffreed no tongue can tell. I tried eight or ten of the best physicians without receiving much benefit, also tried lots of patent medicines, but still I suffered with sick headache, cold feet and hands, palpitation of the heart, and such a heavy feeling in my stomach and chest. At times I would be so nervous I could not bear any one around me. I had been given up to die.

"One day a friend sent me one of Dr. Hartman's pamphlets, and I decided to write to him. He advised Peruna and Manalin, and after taking the medicine two weeks I felt greatly relieved. My head did not pain me any scarcely, and my stomach was relieved of its heavy feeling. I am so thankful that I can say after using several bottles of the Peruna and Manalin I am restored to perfect health.

"Before using your remedies I could not eat anything. I lived on barley water and Panopeptin for two years. Now I can eat with pleasure. Everybody is so surprised at my improvement. Everyone says I am looking like a rose. I would advise all suffering women to take your remedies. I know if it were not for Peruna and Manalin I would have been in my grave today. I cannot thank you enough for the kind advice you have given me."—Miss Alma L. Cox.

Dr. S. B. Hartman, president of the Hartman Sanitarium, of Columbus, O., gives advice to women free during the summer months.

Oysters.

If you want to try a can of the finest, largest, plumpest and most delicious canned oysters you ever saw, ask your grocer to send you a can of Monopole. There is only one packer in the United States who puts up as fine goods as Monopole and therefore they are not to be had under any other brand. Under the Monopole brand we also have packed a full line of canned fruits and vegetables, spices, coffee, baking powder and the like. They are packed under a beautifully embossed blue and gold label. The label is fine, but the goods are finer. Your grocer handles them or can get them for you. See that he does it. Wadhams Kerr Bros., Packers, Portland, Oregon.

The Cook Objected.

Blobbs — Why was the engagement between Hardup and Miss Gotrox broken off?

Slobbs—Her father's cook objected to any further additions to the family.—Philadelphia Record.

Mint Drops.

"Well," remarked the scales at the mint, getting off the time worn joke, "you're worth your weight in gold, sure enough, aren't you?"

"Yes," replied the bullion ingot, "and yet I suppose pretty soon I'll be hard pressed for coin."—Philadelphia Press.

Piso's Cure is a remedy for coughs, colds and consumption. Try it. Price 25 cents, at druggists.

His Favorite Kind.

Rimer—And who is your favorite poet, Mr. Kostique.?

Kostique—Chatterton.

Rimer—Huh! What do you find to admire in him?

Kostique—He committed suicide.—Philadelphia Record.

The Smallest University.

The university at Foura Bay, Sierra Leone, is said to be the smallest in the world. A few years ago it had but 12 students and five professors.

Rheumatism

The liniment bottle and flannel strip are familiar objects in nearly every household. They are the weapons that have been used for generations to fight old Rheumatism, and are about as effective in the battle with this giant disease as the blunderbuss of our forefathers would be in modern warfare.

Rheumatism is caused by an acid, sour condition of the blood. It is filled with acrid, irritating matter that settles in the joints, muscles and nerves, and liniments and oils nor nothing else applied externally can dislodge these gritty, corroding particles. They were deposited there by the blood and can be reached only through the blood. Rubbing with liniments sometimes relieve temporarily the aches and pains, but these are only symptoms which are liable to return with every change of the weather; the real disease lies deeper, the blood and system are infected. Rheumatism cannot be radically and permanently cured until the blood has been purified, and no remedy does this so thoroughly and promptly as S. S. S. It neutralizes the acids and sends a stream of rich, strong blood to the affected parts, which dissolves and washes out all foreign materials, and the sufferer obtains happy relief from the torturing pains.

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"Arabella!"

"Herbert!"—Chicago Tribune.

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"Yes, I played cards with a couple."

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