

PHANTASMS OF THE DESERT.

Mysterious Mirages Seen on a Journey Through Colorado's Plains.

The strange mirages of the desert in the neighborhood of Barstow, Colorado, are causing unusual interest and not a little superstition, especially among those not familiar with the facts of light, heat and optics on the burning sand plains.

For a great distance every way from Barstow the ground is baked under a torrid sun, and the strange phenomena have the appearance of being caused by reflection from the lakes bordered by green grass and flowers, which, under the spell of the mirage, appear to dot these plains of the phantoms.

The ostrich was first introduced into the United States for breeding purposes in 1832. Years ago the attention of the then commissioner of agriculture was called to this industry, and though he tried to interest the government in the enterprise, nothing came of such efforts.

In 1865 there were no more than 50 tame ostriches in South Africa. Ten years later there were 22,000. The leading ostrich farm in Cape Colony is Heath-Town Towers. This extensive and well-managed farm extends over 3,000 acres and is surrounded by wire fences.

The two essential points in ostrich farming are free spaces and good fences. The soil must be rich in alkalies. Sheds are needed for shelter from cold and wet, also for hatching. A female ostrich lays eggs on alternate days, and about 14 in all, but the first one is the largest of the nest, and will continue laying until she has produced twenty or thirty eggs before she thinks of hatching them.

A FORBIDDEN CITY.

Lhasa, the Home of Buddha, or Grand Lama-Roof of the World.

No White Man Has Set Foot Therein for Fifty Years or More.

It is easy to see why the Tibetans lock their doors against the world. If there is any priest-ridden part of the globe it is Tibet. The majority of the better class of the young men enter the Buddhist priesthood. Lhasa, the holy city of Buddhism, contains only about 15,000 inhabitants, but 20,000 priests are said to crowd the lamaseries in its outskirts.

Lhasa is a city of a thousand spires, and is situated on a plateau of about 15,000 feet above the sea level. The city is surrounded by a wall of mud-brick, and is divided into several quarters. The most interesting discovery of the expedition was the fact that the city was not built on a plateau, but on a slope of a mountain.

The expedition was led by a British officer, and the results of their journey are being published in a series of papers. The expedition was a most interesting one, and the results are of great value to the world.

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loftiest part of the great plateau the Haid-Way Mouse to Heaven, and it is strange that the name Pamirs, by which the region is locally known, means valleys. It is stranger still that the name of the time Marco Polo crossed this remarkable region more than six hundred years ago, hardly a scrap of information about it drifted to the outer world until quite recently.

We now know that the lofty plain is covered with mountains that rise to over 25,000 feet at their highest summits; that winter rains descend in torrents from the peaks, and that some of the valleys are sparsely peopled by wandering herdsmen. On three sides of the Pamir flourish all the fruits of the temperate zone. The fact is illustrated here on a grander scale than elsewhere as such a matter of altitude as of latitude.

It would be surprising if this summer's campaign brings the Russians and the French any nearer to Lhasa. But we may hope that they will be well rewarded by discoveries. The Russians have fallen to explore in that field. Nobody knew where the two greatest rivers in China had their rise until Prejevalsky found the head waters of the Hoang Ho tumbling down the eastern slopes of the plateau, and later he and Rockhill, at the middle and upper points of the Yang-tse-kiang's fountain stream, in the very centre of Tibet.

They mapped great mountain ranges and valleys, and they discovered a few fine collections of the fauna and flora of the steppes have not yet been equaled by his successors. Five years ago Bouveret found new mountain chains and volcanoes in north Tibet, and what had been previously seen; and in 1891, Bouveret, entering western Tibet, was the first to see a vast region without drainage to the sea, thickly sprinkled with big salt-lakes, one of which, at an elevation of 17,500 feet, is believed to be the highest lake in the world.

Snowy mountains and ranges were seen here and there, and torrents flowed down their sides to feed the blue salt lakes. There are large regions still untouched, particularly in west-Tibet, and in spite of the discoveries and dangers of exploration there, the field will be the scene of such enterprises for many years to come.

The annual meeting of the British and Foreign Bible Society was held in Exeter Hall on Wednesday, the Earl of Harrowby presiding. The report stated that the year's circulation had been nearly four million copies, supplied to churches and missionary societies or circulated by the society's own agents.

The circulation of the Bible in the world is steadily increasing, and in Persia the circulation had nearly doubled, but in Japan the progress of Christianity seemed to pause before the absorption of the people in their new political passions.

The year's new income has been £141,228, besides £31,740 by sales, showing respectively an increase of £2683 and a decrease of £8048. The total receipts, including £1316 toward the deficit fund, had been £234,284. The expenditures had increased by £1900 to £222,547, and the year thus began with a balance of £11,437.

This, however, was due to legacies being much in advance of the average. The Earl of Harrowby said that in north Africa Mr. Pann had found not only Arab populations, but masses of French colonists, with very little religious instruction. In the east Mr. Sharp had just visited the Armenian Catholics and the Georgian exarch, and had received the heartiest response to his overtures for increasing the circulation of the Scriptures.

A TARIFF CATECHISM.

Protection Somewhat Quantitatively but Freely and Accurately Defined.

The following short catechism was found among the papers of George Otis, a wealthy American recently deceased. It is published here to show what a queer way he had of looking at things. Still, that may have been because the things are so very queer.

Q. What is the meaning of the word "tariff"? A. It is so called because hundreds of years ago, sea pirates at Tariffa, Spain, forced every passing vessel to pay for the privilege of going into and from the Mediterranean sea.

Q. Why do you say taken by force? A. Because Congress says to the people "stand and deliver!" Q. Stand and deliver to whom? A. To the manufacturers, etc.

Q. In which part of the constitution does Congress find power to pass a law compelling the poor to support the rich? A. In no part.

Q. Explain how the tariff law establishes an aristocratic in a democratic government. A. Congress says to the poor, because this or that man is rich and produces iron, or cotton goods, or woolen goods, you shall pay him so much money for so many pounds, or yards or go naked, and work without tools.

Q. What reason does Congress give for such a tyrannical law? A. Congress says the law is a "differentiation of industrial function," which means that industry is the function of the poor, and the difference goes to the rich.

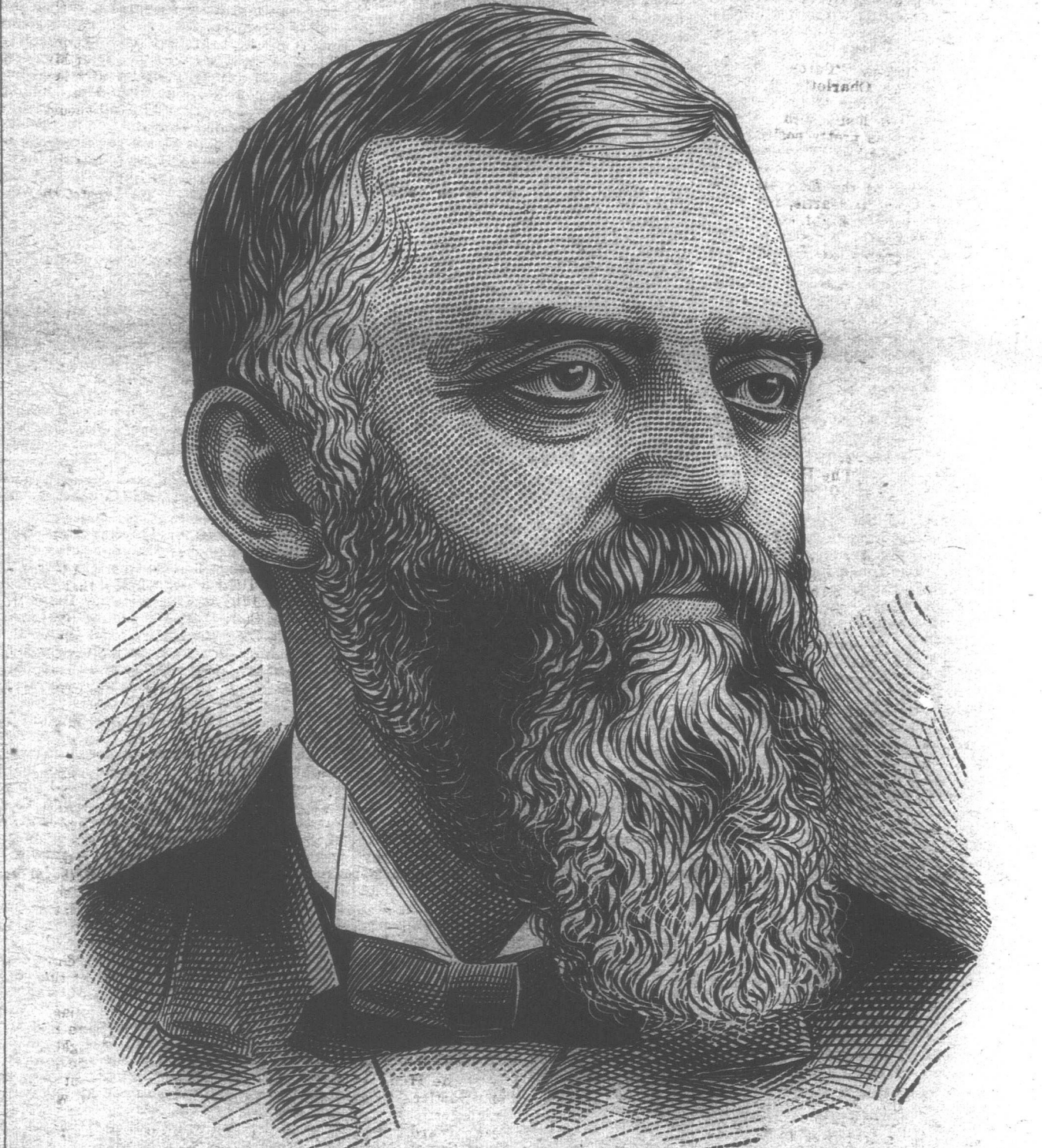
Q. Is that the only reason Congress gives? A. No. It says that the tariff is intended to foster infant industries at home.

Q. Are the iron, cotton and wool industries infants? A. No. They are hundreds of years old.

THE CAPTAIN'S REMARKABLE STATEMENT.

He Says: "Paine's Celery Compound Knocks Out the Medical Practitioner."

Encouraging Testimony from a Popular Winnipeg Resident.



CAPTAIN DOUGLAS.

It would be a difficult matter to find one hundred people in the progressive city of Winnipeg, who do not know popular Captain Douglas. The genial and whole-souled captain is the proprietor of the famous Leland House, amongst the best appointed of Canada's modern hotels.

Requirements of their fastidious tastes. The French corset is more rational in outline, though but little more comfortable to wear. It fits snugly from top to bottom, being drawn in particularly close to the waist.

At luncheon or dinner parties at the Empress Josephine, the drawing-room took no notice, and made a sign to her guests not to notice it.

THE POPE'S HEALTH. A Rome Correspondent Corrects Untruthful Reports. So long as some of the secular press correspondents continue to transmit false accounts of the health of the holy father it will be the duty of Catholics to deny them.

NAPOLÉON AT LUNCH.

The Conqueror Was Not Particular as to His Manners.

The great Napoleon was by no means great in little things. In the fine art of dining he was particularly small, although he was such a genius in attracting foreign visitors by tickling their palates with the most wonderful "receptions" of that Jew among chefs, Le Guepierre.

THEY WEAR CORSETS.

Men With Small Brains Who Also Like Small Waists.

Twice within the last century have attempts at increasing the circulation of the Scriptures failed. The first was in the middle of the last century, when the Russian official, Dostoyevsky, compared favorably with that of our own government.

THE TRAGIC SIDE OF POVERTY.

It is not because of his tolls that I lament for the poor; we must all toll, or starve (however we name our stealing), and his is worse: no faithful henchman finds his toll a pastime.

THE VEST FACILITIES OF THE J. C. AYER CO. Lowell, Mass., enable them to place the Superior Blood-purifier—Ayer's Sarsaparilla—within easy reach of the poorest invalid. Don't be induced to take "cheap" substitutes. Always remember that the best is the cheapest.