

**HESPEROTHEN; NOTES FROM THE
WEST: A RECORD OF A RAMBLE
IN THE U. S. AND CANADA IN THE
SPRING AND SUMMER OF 1881.
IN TWO VOLUMES; VOL. II**

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W. H. RUSSELL

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IN TWO VOLUMES; VOL. II**

HESPEROTHEN;
NOTES FROM THE WEST:

A RECORD OF A
RAMBLE IN THE UNITED STATES AND CANADA
IN THE SPRING AND SUMMER OF 1881.

William Howard BY
W. H. RUSSELL, LL.D.
BARRISTER-AT-LAW.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

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HESPEROTHEN.

CHAPTER I.

ARIZONA.

Deming—The Mirage—Ruined Cities—American Explorers—Self-Tormentors—Animals and Plants—Yuma—California—Los Angeles—Santa Monica—The Pacific.

May 30th.—At an hour as to which controversy might arise, owing to the changes of time to which we have been subjected, the train, which had pulled up but seldom during the night, stopped at Deming Junction, where the Atchison, Topeka, and Santa Fé Railroad “connects” with the Southern Pacific, on which our cars were to be “hailed” to San Francisco. Jefferson time and San Francisco time differ two hours, so at one end of the station we scored 6 A.M., and at the other 8 A.M. The sooner one gets away from Deming in any direction the better. A year ago—as is usually the case hereabouts—there was not a trace of a town on the dry ugly plain covered with prickly acacias and “Spanish bayonets”; now Deming flourishes in gaming and drinking saloons, express offices, and all the horrors of “enterprise” in the West. The look-out revealed a few tents, wooden shanties, a station, at which work-

men were running up a frame-house, ground littered with preserved provision tins, broken crockery, adobes and refuse of all sorts. At the door of one hut, swarming with flies, swung half a carcase of beef; two women were washing, pale-faced, but not uncheerful creatures, who had not a good opinion of Deming and its population. "They carry out a dead man a day, or used to," said one informant. The lady washerwomen did not quite corroborate the figure; but, remarked the chattier of the two, "there was a considerable shewtin' about last night!" To the observation of one of the party that he was "going to have a look about," the other lady made reply, "I guess if you dew it will be 'hands up' for ten cents with you." On the platform was a United States marshal, with a revolver stuck in his belt, but his duties were considered to be punitive rather than preventive. Here Mr. Chase and Mr. Hawley left us to return to Topeka. At the abschiednehmen Sir H. Green was affected by a proof of interest in his welfare of a touching character and very full of local colour; one of our friends beckoned to him, took him aside, and pulling out a revolver ("It is hands up!" thought Sir Henry), fully loaded, pressed it on his acceptance in the kindest manner as a useful *compagnon de voyage*. As we were not to stay at Deming, the self-sacrifice was not consummated.

The regular train having come up, our special was tacked on to it, and in an hour the locomotive puffed out of the depot, and sped westerly on its way at the rate of twenty miles an hour, across a plain some

fifteen miles broad, bordered by jagged, irregular mountain ranges north and south, as dry as a bone—so dry that water for the engine has to be brought to the stations in tanks. A scanty growth of what looked like camel grass, interspersed euphorbias and cactuses of great height, was all that met the eye. We are approaching the great basin of Arizona, and are warned that much dust and great heat must be expected, and that the “scenery” does not improve in point of variety or verdure, both of which are nearly at zero. A vigorous, well-directed campaign against the flies in the saloon gave us comparative repose; then the blinds being pulled down, and the thermometer reduced to 83 deg., society settled itself to study, with results indicated presently by a gentle *susurrus* on the sofas. A sudden alarm, “Look at the deer!” There sure enough was a herd of antelopes flying over the scrub towards the horizon, which flickered about in the heat in a mirage of islands and uplifted mountain ends—so vanished.

After passing Lordsburgh, a desolate spot in the desert, there appeared a beautiful mirage. The sand became a sheet of water, waveless and mirror-like, and in it we saw reflected in trenchant outline the mountain range beyond. “It must be water! it is water!” exclaimed an unbelieving director. And, lo! as he spoke the “dust devils” rose and danced along the face of the sea; in another minute the vision was gone; the dazzling sand, white, blank and dull, mocked our senses. This was near Stein’s Pass, up which the train