

# THE FRANKLIN TIMES.

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NUMBER 3.

## TO PUBLIC SCHOOL TEACHERS

The Superintendent of Public Schools of Franklin county will be in Louisaburg on the second Thursday of February, April, July, September, October and December, and remain for three days, if necessary, for the purpose of examining applicants to teach in the Public Schools of this county. I will also be in Louisaburg on Saturday of each month, and all public days, to attend to any business connected with my office.

J. N. HARRIS, Supt.

## Professional cards.

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## A STUDY IN SCARLET

By A. CONAN DOYLE.

PART II. The Country of the Saints.

CHAPTER I. ON THE GREAT ALPINE PLAIN.

In the central portion of the great North American continent there lies an arid and repulsive desert which for many a long year served as a barrier against the advance of civilization. From the Sierra Nevada to Nebraska and from the Yellowstone river in the north to the Colorado upon the south is a region of desolation and silence. Nor is nature always in one mood throughout this grim district. It comprises snow-capped and lofty mountains and dark and gloomy valleys. There are swift-flowing rivers which dash through jagged canyons, and there are enormous plains which in winter are white with snow and in summer are gray with the saline alkali dust. They all preserve, however, the common characteristics of barrenness, inhospitability and misery.

There are no inhabitants of this land of despair. A band of lawlessness or of Blackfeet may occasionally traverse it in order to reach other hunting grounds, but the hardest of the bravest are glad to lose sight of these awesome plains, and to find themselves once more upon their prairies. The coyote stalks among the scrub, the buzzard flaps heavily through the air, and the clumsy grizzly bear lumbering through the dark ravines, and picks up such sustenance as it can among the rocks. These are the sole dwellers in the wilderness.

In the whole world there can be no more dreary view than that from the northern slope of the Sierra Blanco. As far as the eye can reach stretches the great flat plainland, all dusted over with patches of alkali, and intersected by clumps of the dwarfish chaparral bushes. On the extreme verge of the horizon lies a long chain of mountain peaks, with their rugged summits flecked with snow. In this great stretch of country there is no sign of life, nor of anything appertaining to it. There is no movement upon the dull, gray earth—above all, there is absolute silence. Listen as one may, there is no shadow of a sound in all that mighty wilderness; nothing but silence—complete and heart-subduing silence.

It has been said there is nothing appertaining to life upon the broad plain. That is hardly true. Looking down from the Sierra Blanco, one sees a pathway traced out across the desert, which winds away and is lost in the extreme distance. It is rutted with wheels and trodden down by the feet of many adventurers. Here and there a scattered wreath of sagebrush and a single shrub stand out against the dull deposit of alkali. Approach and examine them! They are bones; some large and coarse, others smaller and more delicate. The former have belonged to oxen, and the latter to men. For fifteen hundred miles one may trace this ghastly caravan route, which winds through the remains of those who had fallen by the way-side.

Looking down on this very scene, there stood upon the 4th of May, 1847, a solitary traveler. His appearance was such that he might have been the very genius or demon of the region. An observer would have found it difficult to say whether he was nearer to forty or to sixty. His face was lean and haggard, and the brown, parchment-like skin was drawn tightly over the projecting bones; his long, brown hair and beard were all flecked and matted with white, his eyes were sunken in his head, and buried with an unnatural luster, while the hand which grasped his rifle was hardly more fleshy than that of a skeleton. As he stood, he leaned upon his weapon for support, and yet his tall figure and the massive framework of his bones suggested a wiry and vigorous constitution. His great face, however, and his clothes, which hung so baggily over his shriveled limbs, proclaimed what it was that gave him that smile and decrepit appearance. The man was dying—dying from hunger and from thirst.

He had toiled painfully down the ravine and on to this little elevation, in the vain hope of seeing some signs of water. Now the great salt plain stretched before his eyes, and the distant belt of savage mountains, without a sign anywhere of plant or tree, which might indicate the presence of moisture. His great face, however, and his clothes, which hung so baggily over his shriveled limbs, proclaimed what it was that gave him that smile and decrepit appearance. The man was dying—dying from hunger and from thirst.

"You've hurt me!" said a childish voice, reproachfully.

toasty golden curls which covered the back of her head.

"Kiss it and make it well," she said, with perfect gravity, shoving the injured part up to him. "That's what mother used to do. Where's mother?"

"Mother's gone. I guess you'll see her before long."

"Gone, eh?" said the little girl. "Funny, she didn't say good-by; she 'most always did if she was just going over to auntie's for tea, and now she's been away for three days. Say, it's no water nor nothing to eat?"

"No, there ain't nothing, dearie. You'll just need to be patient awhile, and then you'll be all right. Put your head up agin me like that, and then you'll feel better. It ain't easy to talk when your lips is like leather, but I guess, I'd best let you know how the cards lie. What's that you've got?"

"Pretty things! Fine things!" cried the little girl enthusiastically, holding up two glittering fragments of mica.

"When we goes back to home I'll give them to Brother Bob."

"You'll see prettier things than them soon," said the man, confidently. "You just wait a bit. I was going to tell you, though—you remember when we left the river?"

"Oh, yes. We reckoned we'd strike another river soon, d'ye see? But there was somethin' wrong; compasses, or map, or somethin', and it didn't turn up. War ran out. Just except a little drop for the likes of you and—"

"And you couldn't wash yourself," interrupted his companion gravely, starting up at his grimy visage.

"No, nor drink. And Mr. Bender, he was the first to go, and then India Pete, and then Mrs. McGregor, and then Johnny Hones, and then, dearie, your mother."

"Then mother's a deader, too," cried the little girl, dropping her face in her pinafore and sobbing bitterly.

"Yes, they all went except you and me. Then I thought there was some chance of water in this direction, so I heaved you over my shoulder and we tramped it together. It don't seem as though we've improved matters. There's an almighty small chance for us now!"

"Do you mean that we are going to die, too?" asked the child, clutching her sob, and raising her tear-stained face.

"I guess that's about the size of it." "Why didn't you say so before?" she said, laughing gleefully. "You gave me such a fright. Why, of course, now as long as we die we'll be with mother again."

"Yes, you will, dearie." "And you, too. I'll tell her how awful good you've been. I'll bet she meets us at the door of Heaven with a big pitcher of water, and a lot of buckwheat cakes, hot, and toasted on both sides like Bob and me was fond of. How long will it be first?"

"I don't know—not very long." The man's eyes were fixed upon the northern horizon. In the blue vault of the heaven there appeared three little specks which increased in size every moment, so rapidly did they approach. They speedily resolved themselves into three large brown birds, which circled over the heads of the two wanderers, and then settled upon some rocks which overlooked them. They were buzzards, the vultures of the west, whose coming is the forerunner of death.

"Oxen and hens!" cried the little girl, gleefully, pointing at their limoed forms, and clapping her hands to make them rise. "Say, did God make this country?"

"In course He did," said her companion, rather startled by this unexpectant question.

"He made the country down in Illinois, and He made the Missouri," the little girl continued. "I guess somebody else made the country in these parts. It's not nearly so well done. They forgot the water and the trees."

"What would you think of offering up prayer?" the man asked, diffidently.

"I ain't nigh yet," she answered. "It don't matter. It ain't quite regular, but He won't mind that, you bet. You say over them ones that you used to say every night in the wagon when we was on the plains."

"Why don't you say some yourself?" the child asked, with wondering eyes.

"I disremember them," he answered. "I hain't said none since I was half the height of that gun. I guess it's never too late. You say them out, and I'll stand by and come in on the choruses."

"Then you'll need to kneel down, and me, too," she said, laying the shawl out for that purpose. "You've got to put your hands up like this. It makes you feel kind of good."

It was a strange sight, had there been anything but the buzzards to see it. Side by side on the narrow shawl knelt the two wanderers, the little, prattling child and the reckless, hardened adventurer. Her chubby face and his haggard, angular visage were both turned up to the cloudless heaven in heartfelt entreaty to that dread being with whom they were face to face, while the two voices—the one thin and clear, the other deep and harsh—united in the entreaty for mercy and forgiveness. "The prayer finished, they resumed their seat in the shadow of the bowlder until the child fell asleep, nestling upon the broad breast of her protector. He watched over her slumber for some time, but nature proved to be too strong for him. For three days and three nights he had allowed himself neither rest nor repose. Slowly the eyelids drooped over the tired eyes, and the head sank lower upon the breast, until the man's grizzled beard was mixed with the golden tresses of his companion, and both slept the same deep and dreamless slumber.

Had the wanderer remained awake for another half-hour a strange sight would have met his eyes. Far away on the extreme verge of the alkali plain there rose up a little spray of water, very slight at first, and hardly to be distinguished from the mists of the

distance, but gradually growing higher and broader until it formed a solid, well-defined cloud. This cloud continued to increase in size until it became evident that it could only be raised by a great multitude of moving creatures. In more fertile spots the observer would have come to the conclusion that one of those great herds of bisons which graze upon the prairie land was approaching him. This was obviously impossible in these arid wilds. As the whirl of dust drew nearer to the solitary bluff upon which the two castaways were reposing, the canvas-covered tops of wagons and the figures of armed horsemen began to show up through the haze, and the apparition revealed itself as being a great caravan upon its journey for the west. But what a caravan!

When the head of it had reached the base of the mountains, the rear was not yet visible on the horizon. Right across the enormous plain stretched the straggling array, wagons and carts, men on horseback and men on foot. Innumerable women who staggered along under burdens, and children who toddled beside the wagons or peeped out from under the white coverings. This was evidently no ordinary party of immigrants, but rather a band of fugitives, who had been expelled from stress of circumstances to seek themselves a new country. There rose through the clear air a confused clattering and rumbling from this great mass of humanity, with the creaking of wheels and the neighing of horses. Loud as it was, it was not sufficient to rouse the two tired wayfarers above them.

At the head of the column there rode a score or more of grave, iron-faced men, clad in somber, homespun garments and armed with rifles. On reaching the base of the bluff they halted and held a short council among themselves.

"The wells are to the right, my brothers," said a one, a hard-lipped, clean-shaven man with grizzled hair.

"To the right of the Sierra Blanco—so we shall reach the Rio Grande," said another.

"Fear not for water," cried a third. "We could not draw from a well more than thirty years of age, but whose massive head and resolute expression marked him as a leader. He was leading a brown-backed volume, but as the crowd approached he laid it aside and listened attentively to an account of the episode. Then he turned to the two castaways.

"If we take you with us," he said, in solemn tones, "it can only be as believers in our own creed. We shall have no wolves in our fold. Better far that you should die here."

"Amert Amen!" responded the whole party.

They were about to resume their journey when one of the youngest and keenest-eyed uttered an exclamation which arrested the attention of the whole band. "There's a number of Indians here," said the elderly man who appeared to be in command. "We have passed the Pawnees, and there are no other tribes until we cross the great mountains."

"What I go for and see, Brother Stangerson," asked one of the band.

"And I," and "I," cried a dozen voices.

"Leave your horses below and we will wait you here," the elders answered. In a moment the young fellows had dismounted, fastened their horses, and were ascending the precipitous slope which led up to the object which had excited their curiosity. They advanced rapidly and noiselessly, with the confidence and dexterity of practised scouts. The watchers from the plain below could see them fit from rock to rock until their figures stood out against the sky-line. The young man who had first given the alarm was leading them. Suddenly his followers saw him throw up his hands, as though overcome with astonishment, and on joining him they were affected in the same way by the sight which met their eyes.

On the little plateau which crowned the barren hill there stood a single giant bowlder, and against this bowlder there lay a tall man, long-bearded and hard-featured, but of an excessive thinness. His placid face and regular breathing showed that he was fast asleep. Beside him lay a little child, with her round white arms encircling his brown, sinewy neck, and her golden-haired head resting upon the breast of his velvet tunic. Her regular lips were parted, showing the rosary line of snow-white teeth within, and a playful smile played over her infantile features. Her jump little white legs, terminating in white socks, and neat shoes with shining buckles, offered a strange contrast to the long, shriveled members of her companion. On the ledge of rock above this strange couple there stood three solemn buzzards, who, at the sight of the newcomers, uttered raucous screams of disappointment and tapped sullenly away.

The cries of the four birds awoke the two sleepers, who stared about them in bewilderment. The man staggered to his feet and looked down upon the plain which had been so desolate when sleep had overtaken him, and which was now traversed by this enormous body of men and of beasts. His face assumed an expression of incredulity as he gazed, and he passed his bony hand over his eyes. "This is what they call delirium, I guess," he muttered. The child stood beside him, holding on to the skirt of his coat, and said nothing, but looked all round her with a wondering, questioning gaze of childhood.

The rescuing party were speedily able to convince the two castaways that their appearance was no delusion. One of them seized the little girl and hoisted her upon his shoulder, while two others supported her giant companion and assisted him toward the wagons.

"My name is John Ferrier," the wanderer exclaimed; "me and the little un are all that's left of twenty-one people. The rest is all dead of thirst and hunger away down in the south."

"Is she your child?" asked some one.

"I guess she is now," the other cried, defiantly; "she's mine 'cause I saved her. No one will take her away from me. She's Lucy Ferrier from this day on. She's your thought," he continued, glancing with curiosity at his stalwart, sunburned rescuers. "There seems to be a powerful lot of ye."

Highest of all in Leavening Power.—Latest U. S. Gov't Report.

## Royal Baking Powder

ABSOLUTELY PURE

Most of the Northern papers severely condemn the late General Early for his connection with the Louisiana lottery, but the Philadelphia Inquirer says of him: "It is not necessary to approve of Early to make an effort to understand him. Walter Scott would have delighted in him. He never succumbed to the success of his foes. He wore the gray clothes of his cause until he died and remained to the last unreconstructed."

It beat the doctors.—Mrs. B. Boyd, 22 Weeden street, Providence, R. I., says: "I suffered for three months from rheumatism and neuralgia. The doctor's medicines not giving me any relief, I tried Salvation Oil, and after using two bottles, consider myself perfectly cured."

A Connecticut farmer through mistake drank some blue vitriol instead of Jersey whiskey, and thus saved his life.—Kansas City Journal.

Specimen Cases. S. H. Clifford, New Cassel, Pa., was troubled with neuralgia and rheumatism, his stomach was disordered, his liver was affected to an alarming degree, appetite fell away, and he was terribly reduced in flesh and strength. Three bottles of Electric Bitters cured him.

Edward Shepherd, Harrisburg, Pa., had a running sore on his leg of eight years standing. Used three bottles of Electric Bitters and soon began to heal. His wife, Mrs. J. H. Shepherd, Harrisburg, Pa., had a running sore on her leg of eight years standing. Used three bottles of Electric Bitters and soon began to heal.

Mr. Sovereign should add to the force of his remarks by making them expurgated before making them public.—Washington Star.

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1894. HARPER'S PERIODICALS. PER YEAR.

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