

DAYS AND NIGHTS.

Higher the daily hours of anguish rise,
And mount around me as the swelling
deep,
Till past my mouth and eyes their moments
flow,
And I am drowned in sleep.
But soon the tide of night begins to ebb:
Chained on the barren shore of dawn I
lie,
Again to feel the day's slow-rising flood,
Again to live and die.
—Anne Reeve Aldrich, in Lippincott.

A NIGHT RIDE.

"Yes, boys, they've left the Reservation, and are killing and scalping ter beat thunder. I met a scout terday, over in their Big Coolies, an' he posted me."
"How many are thar of 'em, Jack?"
"Wal, as near as he could tell, thar was somehars erbout thirty er thirty-five."
"How are they off fer shooting irons?"
"I didn't yer find out?"
"I should say they was all heeled fer keeps. The scout told me that they all had Winchester, an' a hull lot of 'em had six-shooters as well. And now, boys, we've got ter ride like sin ter-morrow, an' gether in all the critters, an' push 'em over into the Deep Creek country fer safety. I hardly think the reds will navigate that way. So here's for a smoke, and then bed."
The speaker, big Jack Burns, foreman of the I. C. Horse Outfit, leisurely produced pipe and tobacco as coolly as if the murderous Apaches were a thousand miles away instead of thirty.
We were only seven men, counting the Mexican cook, in the dug-out attached to the corral, and were employees of the big I. C. Company; and well we knew what an Apache outbreak meant, for we all had suffered more or less from their cruel raids. But we had been intrusted with the horses, and we intended, if possible for human power to keep them out of the clutches of the redskins, to do so; for we had all received many little kindnesses from the company, and from the highest to the lowest there was mutual good-will and friendly feeling,—very different from some outfits, who treat their vaqueros with far less consideration than they do their horses or cattle.
"Jimmie did yer go down to the Cactus Ranch fer the six-shooter cartridges?"
"Yes, but I did, an' got purty close ter a thousand rounds."
"That's kind er comforting. Did yer here tell of any news down thar?"
"Nothing perticular. They was a talk-in' erbout that thar settler, over on Antelope Flat; they allowed that if trouble come with the reds, he would be in a purty tough place, specially as he are a tenderfoot. I'd hate ter see anything happen ter 'em. I passed that the other day, and his little gal come out, and says, sarter anxious like:
"Mister, hev you got a leetle gal?"
"So I says, 'No, little sissy, I hain't."
"Nor no leetle boys?" says she.
"Nary one," says I, and I told her that she was the first leetle un I'd seen fer many a day, an' we had quite a leetle confab, an' then her mother come out, an' she war a very pleasant lady, she war, an' she said she allowed that the leetle un ter war lonesome fer other leetle uns ter play with. They've got a right young baby thar, too, but the leetle gal says that baby can't do nothing but sleep, an' laugh, an'—
"Hark! listen, men, listen!" and in second big Jack had pushed open the door, and was looking intently out over the moonlit prairie.
"What is it, Jack?" asked the boys, as they gathered outside.
"Did yer hear shooting?"
"No, but thars a shod hoss a-coming like blazes."
Yes, the thud, thud, thud, of ironshod hoofs were now plainly heard, and away out a faint glimmer of dust could be discerned.
"Boys, I'm afeared that thar's trouble somehars!" continued Jack.
"Wal, judging from the way that hoss is a-hitting the trail, we can mighty soon tell now," said Hank Shover.
And soon the sight that greeted our eyes showed us that there was trouble somewhere,—for out of the dust and glimmer sprang a powerful white mare, while on her back, securely tied to the heavy frontier saddle, was the new settler's "leetle gal."
With astonished and anxious faces, we sprang to the mare's side, and lifted the little maid out of the saddle; and big Jack carried her tenderly into the dug-out, while with wondering faces the rest of us quietly followed.
"Please, Mr. Big Jack. I've brought a letter from pap."
"A letter, child. You've brought a letter twenty miles. What in the name o' the Great Medicine war yer dad a thinkin' erbout ter send a baby like you with it?"
"I don't know, please, Mr. Big Jack, perhaps he's hurt, 'cause his eyes were wet and mamma was crying. Then papa wrote a letter and put me on old Nan and told me to keep on the wagon trail till I got to the lone tree, and then head for the Black Canon, and he gave me a switch to beat old Nan, 'cause he said if Nan didn't run good, baby Frank would never laugh any more,—and that would be awful. So I beat her all the way, and came drefful quick,—and judging from the mare's heaving sides, the little one had ridden her fer all she was worth."
"Wal, give me thar letter, leetle un, an' we'll mighty soon see what's wanted."
The letter had been securely fastened to the little one's dress, but it was soon in Jack's hands.
"Sissy, don't yer feel like eatin' a bite of grub, and drinkin' a cup of coffee?"

"No, thank you, sir, but I am sleepy, and very tired, and—"
"Juan, keep the child sort of amused fer a minit, an' boys come"; and big Jack led the way to the far end of the room.
"Boys, here's the deuce ter pay." In a low voice, he read the letter:
To the Boys at the Stone Corral:
I was out on the ridge at the back of my shanty, and not over twenty miles away I saw a big band of Apaches coming. They will be here inside of three hours. My little girl is a good rider, and the mare is sure-footed and fast, so I send this by her, asking you for aid. May God guide her to you.
If you cannot help us, our doom is sealed. My relatives live in L—, Michigan; write to them in regard to my little daughter.
Hoping and praying you are in sufficient force to aid us, FRANK STANTON.
God knows I would not want help for myself, but think of my wife and baby.
Tears were in our eyes, as Jack finished the short and rather incoherent letter; and then,—good heavens, to think that we were only seven in all.
"O boys, if we were only a few more."
"What can we do, Jack?"
"Wal, I'm afeared if we tried ter git help from the Cactus Ranch it would be too late."
"Do the leetle gal know the trouble?"
"No."
"Wal, let's ask her of her dad hav got shooting irons."
"Sissy, did yer pap hev gun, and things ter home ter shoot jack-rabbits with?"
"Yes, sir, he's got a shotgun, and he bought a nice rifle that shoots without loading, and please, Mr. Big Jack, can go to bed now? I'm so tired."
"Jimmie, put the leetle un in your bunk, an' you kin' turn in with me if we gets time ter sleep."
"But Jack, hain't we ergoin' ter try an' help 'em somehow?"
"God knows I wish we could. But we have ter leave one man with the horses, an' what are six agin a crowd?"
And truly it looked hopeless,—but O, to think of the fate of that gentle mother and tender babe.
"Boys, this is maddening. We must do somethin'."
Jimmie had by this time fixed the bunk and taken off the child's shoes.
"And now, dearie, pile in, an' take a real good snooze."
"But, Mr. Jimmie, you must hear me say my prayers first."
If a shell had come crashing into the dug-out it could not have created more astonishment than the simple request of the child.
Quick-witted Jimmie had, however, pulled himself together quicker than a flash, and before the child noticed the astonished and confused looks, he had carefully spread a bearskin on the dirt floor, and gently as his own mother had her "say her prayers."
The beautiful Lord's Prayer was repeated in the clear voice, and then came, "And please, my Heavenly Father, bless my own dear papa and mamma, and little baby brother, and Mr. Big Jack, and all the boys at the Stone Corral."
Starting up and drawing the back of his hand hastily across his eyes, and endeavoring to steady his voice, big Jack said: "Jimmie, you an' Juan stay an' tend ter the leetle un. We uns are ergoin' to help the folks."
Crash, and the dug-out door flew open, and five determined men—yes, men in every sense of the word that night—rushed to the corral, buckling on their heavy six-shooters as they ran.
The heavy stock saddles are strapped on, and muscular arms tug and tug at the long latigo straps, until the chinchas seem as if they would cut through hair and hide, so tight are they.
"Be sure and cinch 'em well, boys, we can't stop to tighten 'em after we get started."
"Ay, ay, yer kin bet on us, Jack."
"Are yer all O K?"
"You bet."
"Then head fer the Baldy Mountain an' if ever you spurred, spur this night."
Out and away, leaning low, until our breasts almost rested on the saddle horn, and with spurs tightly pressed against our bronchos' sides, we swept swiftly away from the stone corral. Big Jack was on the left and a little in the lead; and as we rushed over a low sand ridge, I saw him and his horse showing dark and clearly out against the sky. He was riding his best this night, and his blue roan was stretching himself like a thoroughbred.
And now we came to a long stretch covered with loose and jagged granite; at any other time we would have pulled up and carefully picked our way over. But to-night the stakes we were riding for was far too precious to care for horse-flesh, or even our own necks; so with slightly tightened reins and only our toes resting in the broad stirrups, we pushed madly across, the sparks flashing as the iron shoes flashed against the rough rock. Across at last, thank God, and once more on the smooth plain, our galant cayuses, with ears well forward, and distended nostrils, were stretching themselves and throwing dust like heroes.
Out of the sand and up on the rim rock we tried a spur, but the jaded animals were doing their best, and the steel failed to get an extra jump out of them. Another mile would bring us to a point where we would be able if it were daylight to see the settler's cabin.
Through a long sag, then a dry creek bed; crashing through the stunted willows that lined its banks, we breasted the slight ascent, and in another minute were on the summit. We involuntarily checked our panting horses, and a thrill of horror ran through us as we saw a bright glare of light ahead.
"Too late, too late, boys. The reds have got 'em." Jack's voice sounded almost like a groan.
"How far are we from the place?"
"Erbout five miles 'round by the wagon road, but we kin lead our horses down the deer trail, and git thar in two."
"Then let's follow the deer trail; we

may yit be in time ter help 'em some way."
Leading our staggering, trembling horses, we cautiously crept down the precipitous trail, and moaning, headed straight for the glare, which even in the valley could be distinctly seen.
Nobody now remembered that we were only five to thirty, and goaded and cut by the spurs, the cayuses carried us rapidly over the ground.
When within half a mile we halted in the shadow of some overhanging rocks, while Hank cautiously crawled up, and out on a projecting shelf to reconnoitre, for if the Apaches had any scouts thrown out we should have to be careful, as our only chance of success was to surprise them.
While we were waiting we carefully examined our six-shooters, and in another minute, to our great joy, Hank was telling us that the barn was on fire, but the dwelling-house was still intact, and that he could distinctly hear the crack of rifles, showing us plainly that the brave settler was still defending his loved ones.
"Now boys, here's thar best plan I kin think on—I hain't extra much of a general, but I hev an idea that it's the best way fer us ter do. We'll lead our critters down this gully till we git ter thar scrub brush—we kin do that without the reds ketching on ter us—then we'll mount. Yer see by that time the cayuses will be getting their wind purty well. Then we'll ride right square down on 'em, yelling like fury an' wharver a red gets up we'll down him. Then if they make it too hot for us, we'll dodge inter the cabin."
"An' what then, Jack?"
"Wal, we'll sorter help the settler to hold the fort. Anyway we kin keep 'em from setting the shanty afire, 'till the cavalry comes. By this time the troops must be on the trail an' after 'em red hot. They can't be a great ways off, nohow."
Silently as spectres then we led our horses down the gully, carefully avoiding the rocks that here and there cropped out through the sand. Reaching the scrub willows, we found ourselves within 300 yards of the house, and perhaps about 400 from the burning barn.
Climbing quietly into our saddles, we bent low to keep out of the glare, and Jack whispered, "Are yer all ready?"
"Yes," whispered back, and we pressed our sombreros tightly down on our heads.
With a rush and a crash we tore through the brush and rode at full speed out into the clearing, now almost as light as day, for the big, heavy barn timbers were burning clearly and steadily. Across we went, our excited animals plunging and leaping like panthers, but still no Indians.
Past the house and within a few yards of the burning barn we pulled up. The silence confused us. Were we to late after all? Mechanically we closed up—a fatal move, for with unearthly yells and blood-curdling whoops, the Indians, from a low sag in the ground on the left, sent a murderous volley crashing into our midst.
Down went our brave horses, and down went their riders. Four of us scrambled to our feet as we cleared ourselves from the stirrup leathers, only to throw ourselves behind our lead-riddled, dying animals just in time to save ourselves; for again the villains poured their lead into us—this time, thank heaven, doing us no harm.
Using our horses for breastworks, we tried to return their fire, but they were effectually concealed.
"Anybody hit?"
"Yes, I saw Hank throw up his hands and fall face down."
"Boys, we've got ter get out of this or they'll surround us sure."
"Kin we make a break fer the cabin?"
"I think we might manage ter crawl thar, by kinder keeping the horses between us and the red cusses."
"Hark, somebody's hollerin'!"
Looking over our shoulders, we saw that the door of the shanty was partly open, and the settler vigorously beckoning to us.
"We must try an' see if poor Hank is clean done fer, fust."
One of the boys crawled cautiously around to the dead horse and fallen rider, and returning in the same manner, whispered sorrowfully that "poor Hank had passed in his chucks."
"Now, boys, we'll make a run fer it,—stoop low," and with a spring, away we rushed for the door.
Another stream of lead whistled by us, but nobody fell, and in another second, we were inside the heavy door, and helping the settler barricade it.
"I heard you when you charged by, men, but it took me some time to open the door, as I had a hull lot of things piled agin it!"
"Are ye all safe so far, Stanton?"
"Yes, thank God. My wife is guarding the back of the house, and I'm watching this part. What we feared most is that they will fire the place, like they did the barn. My little daughter reached you safely, did she?"
"Yes, and is staying in the dug-out at the corral. We left two of the boys with her."
"Now, men, I'll show you the loopholes in the logs, and I'll go and tell the wife the little one is safe."
Hour after hour we strained our eyes, peering through the loopholes trying to catch sight of the redskins. But they were very wary and seemed to have a wholesome dread of venturing into the freilist space in the front of the house.
Presently Stanton came quietly in and said: "Boys, there's something going on at the back that I don't understand."
Leaving one man in the front room, we repaired with him to the room in the rear of the building.
Jack pressed his face close to a loophole and stared steadily out into the darkness. Suddenly he stepped back,

and, pulling his six-shooter, pointed it through the loophole and fired.
A wild yell of rage answered the shot.
"Aha, I thought I could fetch him. I saw him crawling up, an' had a burning stick under his blanket. I guess he won't burn no more shanties. Give me a chaw of tobacco, somebody."
And now we saw a faint streak of dawn in the east, and soon the sun was gilding the distant Baldy Mountain, and what to us was a far more welcome sight still—was glistening on the scabbards and accoutrements of a company of Uncle Sam's boys as they came through the pass at a sharp trot.
The barricaded door was quickly thrown open, and rushing out we saw the Indians in full retreat a mile out on the mesa. Judging from their haste they must have seen the cavalry, for they were pushing their ponies.
The cavalry had also caught sight of them, for they were coming like the wind, and as they swept by, in spite of our weariness and grief at the loss of our pard, we cheered them until we were hoarse.
The next day we obtained horses and safely escorted the settler, his wife and baby to the Cactus Ranch.—(Overland Monthly.)

Wild Mustangs in Pennsylvania.

On Black's Island, five miles from the City of Philadelphia, on the Delaware River, are a drove of eighty or more untamed mustangs, not one of which has ever been shod or touched with a strap of harness. The island is a bleak waste of meadow land, covered by a heavy growth of thick grass. Here the mustangs live, as wild and uncared for as though on the Western plains. The horses are owned by Messrs. Richard and Lewis Wistar, two wealthy and eccentric Philadelphians. In 1873 they took a couple of Chincoteague mares up from the South and placed them on Black's farm, just below Fort Mifflin. Both the mares were in foal, and they were turned out on the island and allowed to run wild. From that beginning the herd has increased as stated. The ponies are at perfect liberty all the year round, and are without shelter in winter as well as summer. In fact, they are to all intents and purposes, as wild as the wildest mustangs in the West. The colts are foaled without shelter of any kind, and grow up strong, rugged and as wild as though hundreds of miles from civilization. During the winter, when the ground is covered with snow, the horses are obliged to paw holes in the snow in order to get at the dead grass underneath. After the manner of wild horses they divide themselves into smaller herds, each having a stallion for a leader. There appears to be a rivalry between these herds, and royal battles are waged between the stallions. In color the horses are mostly bays, creams and piebalds, and range from thirteen to fifteen hands. Although the Wistar brothers have not visited the island for thirteen years, they steadily refuse to part with any of the ponies under any consideration.—(Philadelphia Record.)

The Use of the Tonsils.

When one gets a sore throat he is apt to wish that he had no tonsils, but medical science, it is said, has lately demonstrated that in such a case he would be in a very sad state. The tonsils are the factory where the white blood cells are made, and whence they start on their beneficent mission through the system to destroy the enemies of health. Moreover, it has been discovered that the tonsils stand at the very entrance of the throat, ready to challenge every enemy that enters through the breath or food. This explains why so many of the germs which enter our mouth do not perform destructive work. They are met, challenged and killed by the white cell sentries in the tonsils. It appears from this that people who are subject to quinsy and inflammation of the tonsils are not so well protected as those who have strong, healthy tonsils. Weakened from some cause, the work shops of the sanitary agents are attacked by the enemies and yield to the inroads of the very germs which they are intended to kill. Extreme caution in the winter time to preserve these glands from colds and irritation might be the means of warding off many diseases of a violent nature. These discoveries are not only interesting, but of great hygienic value. Heretofore medical science has marked the use of these glands as "unknown."
[New Orleans Picayune.]

Animals and Locomotives.

In a German engineering journal a writer contrasts the behavior of different animals toward steam machinery thus: The ox, that proverbially stupid animal, stands composedly on the track of a railway without having any idea of the danger that threatens him; dogs run among the wheels of a department railway train without suffering any injury, and birds seem to take a particular delight in the steam engine. Larks often build their nests and rear their young under the switches of a railway over which heavy trains are constantly rolling, and swallows make their home in engine houses. A pair of swallows have reared their young for a year in a mill where a noisy 300 horse power engine is working night and day, and another pair have built a nest in the paddle box of a steamer.—(Boston Budget.)

BE KNEW HIM.
"Algernon," she said dramatically, "is a man after my own heart."
"No, he isn't, my dear," replied her practical father, "he's after your pocket book."

DEATH VALLEY.

A UNIQUE DESERT IN THE FAR SOUTHWEST.

It is Walled in on Three Sides and 200 Feet Below Sea Level.—Effects of Its Terrible Heat.

Death Valley proper is unique, writes John R. Spears in the New York Sun. It is about 74 miles long, running from north to south, and from five to fifteen miles wide. At its lowest point, where its climate is worst, the width is not above eight miles from foothills to foothills. It is opposite this depression to the west that the Panamints reach their highest altitude, while east of the Funeral Range is a huge ridge with almost a vertical precipice on the side next to the valley. A few miles to the south a mountain range running east and west shuts in the foot of the valley so that at its lower end Death Valley is walled in on all sides but one.
Just what the depth is I do not know. A California mining bureau report written by Prof. Hanks puts the lowest depression at 110 feet below the sea. One of Dr. C. Hart Merriam's party of Government experts who went into the valley in the summer of 1891 said the depression was 200 feet below the sea. I have seen one statement in print which placed the depression 400 feet below the sea. No doubt that was an exaggeration. Whatever the real depression is, it is interesting to note that fifteen miles west of this depression is Telescope peak, rising more than two miles above the sea, while within an equal distance easterly is Funeral peak, rising 8,000 feet above the sea. Where can two mountains like these be found with such a rent between them?
In its general aspect Death Valley is gray and sombre; it is even desolate and forbidding. To admire the scenery from any point in the valley one must have a love of nature in her sternest moods. The natural vegetation is scant and stunted, and there is not a green thing that grows there naturally. The thorny mesquite trees are of a yellowish green tinge; so, too, are the grease bushes, while the sage brush and weeds, of which there are several varieties, are either yellowish gray or the color of ashes. A little round gourd grows in some of the canons. It turns yellow when ripe, and has a thin meat that is exceedingly bitter. It is called the desert apple. The cactus, that grows beyond the valley in abundance, is rare here. In short, the vegetation of Death Valley is terribly scant in comparison with that of even the Mojave desert.
Arid as the valley is throughout its whole extent, there are two running streams within its confines. One comes in at the north end, where it forms a marsh that gives out volumes of sulphuretted hydrogen. Some who have seen it believe that the water comes through a subterranean passage from Owens Lake, beyond the Panamint Mountains. The water of this stream is like that of the lake, and the flow never varies from one season to the other. Incredible as the proposition seems, this brook may be an outlet of the lake.
The other stream, Furnace Creek, which rises in springs in the Funeral Mountains, has pretty good, if warm, water, and is the only support of the ranch that was made by the borax people.
But more interesting to the tourist than all that can be seen or said about the lay of the land are the stories told about its climate. The story of Death Valley is full of apparent contradictions. Here was a ranch, for instance, on which three men found work in caring for the meadows and stock; a little over a mile away were the buildings where forty men were employed in making borax, most of them in the open air, wholly unprotected from the sun's rays, and some engaged about a furnace where a great heat was maintained. How could these things be if it were true that men died from heat and lack of moisture when they had water in their hands? It was a curious case, but both statements of fact were true.
With the prevailing wind from the west, Death Valley, deep and narrow, is guarded on the west by the lofty and precipitous Panamints, while four other ranges and four valleys, for the most part absolutely arid, lie between it and the sea, the only source of moisture. Even west of the Sierras the plains of Tulare county must be irrigated to make them productive. Imagine now what the condition of the air must be when, having been drained of its moisture by the ranges near the sea, it sweeps inland over the wide and undulating desert east of the Sierras, where the sun's rays beat down relentlessly from above and are reflected back up from yellow mesas and white hot salt beds. It becomes not only so hot that it strikes the face like a blast from a furnace, but it is well nigh devoid of moisture. People who talk to the weather sharps of the Signal Service Bureau are told that with 70 per cent. of humidity the air is about right. With but 60 or 50 per cent, as when the air in a room is heated by a stove or furnace, the moisture is taken from the body in a way to produce headaches, but should the percentage be reduced to 40 or to 30 the air becomes positively dangerous to health. In Death Valley, the air, raised to furnace heat by its passage over the deserts to the west, is kiln dried in the pit below sea level till the percentage of moisture is said to be at times less than one.
Of the effect of the heat there abundant and trustworthy testimony may be had. While making the ditch which supplied the ranch with water, J. S. Crouch and O. Watkins slept in the running water with their heads on stones to keep their faces above the fluid, although that was not in the hottest season. Philander Lee, an old desert man well inured

to the heat, while at work on the ranch regularly slept in the alfalfa where it grew under the shade of some willows and was abundantly irrigated.
Other effects of the arid air are found in the utter ruin within a few days of every article of furniture built elsewhere and carried there. A writing desk curled and split and fell to pieces. Tables warped into curious shapes. Chairs fell apart. Water barrels incautiously left empty lost their hoops in an hour. One end of a blanket that had been washed was found to have dried while the other end was manipulated in the tub. A handkerchief taken from the tub and held up to the sun dried in a flash—quicker than it would have done before a red-hot stove.
Meat killed at nine and cooked at 6 in the morning had spoiled at 9. Cut this, dipped in hot brine, and hung in the sun, it is cured in an hour. Flour breeds worms in less than a week. Eggs are roasted in the sand. Fig trees bloom and produce fruit near the house every spring, but the figs never mature. Though water flows about the roots of the trees, the figs dry up and fall off in July.
Surveyor McGillivray said after running out the land for the borax companies:
"The heat there is intense. A man cannot go an hour without water without becoming insane. While we were surveying there we had the same wooden case thermometer that is used by the signal service. It was hung in the shade on the side of our shed, with the only stream in the country flowing directly under it, and it repeatedly registered 130 degrees, and for forty-eight hours in 1883, when I was surveying there, the thermometer never once went below 104 degrees.
"Several of our men went insane. One of them was a Chinaman, who had wandered away as soon as he had lost his senses. We hunted for him for a while, and were then forced to give him up as lost. A few days afterward we went to a town sixty or seventy miles from there to get some provisions, when an Indian came into the town, leading our lost Chinaman, still insane, and performing all sorts of strange tricks, to the infinite delight of the Indian, who thought he had found a prize clown, and regarded it as the best joke of the season."
The human body, when suffering from a fever, is dangerously hot at 105 degrees Fahrenheit. It has been known to reach 112 degrees, but death quickly followed.
A thermometer hanging under the wide veranda on the north side of the adobe house in Death Valley has registered 137. It is in such weather as this that the sand storms in their deadly fury sweep through the valley, and even desert birds caught away from the saving spring or stream fall down and die. It is a fact that since the ranch was established one man had died from the heat while lying still in the house, while another, riding with a canteen in his hand on top of a load of borax bound down the valley, fell over and expired.
"He was that parched his head cracked open over the top," said a man who saw the body.
Such is Death Valley in the heat of summer. In October Death Valley becomes a dreamy, sunny climate, the home of the Indian summer. The change of climate which the whole desert country undergoes in the course of a year is remarkable. One reads in the authentic reports of the California Mining Bureau about snow falling in the mountains west of Death Valley to a depth of three feet, while Superintendent Strachan of the Teels Marsh borax works in Esmeralda county, Nevada, noted a temperature of 120 degrees in the shade of his house in August, and yet before the winter was over he saw mercury freeze and the temperature sink to 50 degrees below zero. There is probably no place on earth where a wider variation of the thermometer than this has ever been observed, just as no place so hot as Death Valley has been found, the greatest heat of the arid region about the Red Sea being less than 127 degrees.
But one feature of Death Valley weather remains to be noted here. It will not do to say that rain never falls in Death Valley; it rarely falls there, but cloud bursts, concentrated storms of the utmost fury, are often seen about the mountain tops as well as around the mountains throughout the whole desert region. As described by the desert men, they come in the hottest weather and usually when least expected. Right in a clear sky appears a cloud, black and ominous, streaked with fire, growing with wonderful rapidity, and eventually sagging down like a great sack. The cloud is always formed above the mountains, and after a time its bulbous body strikes a peak. Floods of water are released on the instant, and in waves of incredible size they roll down the cliffs and canons. Precipices and peaks are carved away, gulches are filled with the debris, mesas and foothills covered. The face of a mountain may be so changed in an hour as to be scarce recognizable, and even the lighter storms rip the heart out of a canon, so that only gulches and heaps of broken rock are found where once perhaps a good trail existed.

MR. LITTLEDATE, who has just been traveling through the Pamir country of Central Asia which figures largely in Russo-British politics just now, says that it is one of the most desolate regions imaginable. The mountains are high and wild, robed in eternal snows, while below the mountains, instead of verdant fields and forests, is a picture of utter desolation that would be hard to match in any other part of the world. The country at the base of the mountains is so high above the sea that vegetation is very scanty, and the plains are most forbidding in aspect.