

THE DAILY BEE.

OMAHA PUBLISHING CO., PROPRIETORS.

516 Farnham, bet. 9th and 10th Streets.

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RAILWAY TIME TABLE.

LEAVING OMAHA EAST OR SOUTH BOUND. C. & N. W. 5 a. m. - 3:40 p. m.

ARRIVING FROM THE WEST AND NORTHWEST. C. & N. W. 10:30 a. m. - 4:25 p. m.

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at and Bonnet Bleachers.

Ladies get your Straw, Chip and Feat Hats done up at northeast corner Seventeenth and Capitol Avenue. WM. DORR, Proprietor.

CASEY'S HOTEL, 208 and 210th Streets.

SILVER'S HOTEL, 7th Street, 10th Street.

Origin of Architectural Idea -

Glowing Sunset Tints and Shining Stars.

Correspondence of The San Francisco Chronicle.

CASCADES OF THE COLUMBIA, June 8, 1881. - The scenery of the Columbia, or to be perfectly accurate, of that part of it which is connected with the Cascade mountains, is infinitely grander, more beautiful, more varied and more peculiar than the tourist is apt to anticipate.

The eighty-six miles between Portland and the Dalles comprise a region which appeals most forcibly to those who have a smattering of geology.

Throughout seven-eighths of the journey the river Columbia makes its way through the Cascade range of mountains, many of whose peaks are snow clad, and some of them attain an altitude exceeding 14,000 feet.

Looking at this range from any other point than this river, it seems as if it were a vast wall or plateau some 5,000 feet high, and that the snow peaks rise out of this like kings seated upon raised platforms.

But from the river it is plain that these great peaks, Hood, Shasta, Adams, St. Helens, Baker, Rainier, the Three Sisters and others, are standing almost to their waists in their lava, in the cooling of which they have in past times belched out. There was a time when people believed that rivers cut their channels by their own unaided force in their way to the sea, but no one can look upon this scene and so agree. It is more probable that the lava contracted greatly in cooling, and that in the fissures made by such contraction the river cut its outlet. It is true that a fissure so enormous as the Columbia of the Columbia, for the river here is a mile broad, is opposed to the conceptions of all but theorists. But it is difficult to conceive that the river and the lava beds were coeval. Probably there were tens of thousands of years between the earliest deposits from this great section of the volcanic range that reaches so far south and north.

The upper part of the basalt gorge through which the Columbia pours its waters must have been reduced by disintegration to a broad glacier or slope before there was a river at all. One has only to look at the little lava beds or the surface of the ground to see in what order the fissures are formed by the contraction of the cooling process. They are both longitudinal and transverse, so that the blocks are eminently rectangular. And what is true of the small masses five feet high is usually true of the masses of the plateau 5,000 feet high. They are pierced by gorges which run east and west like the river, and north and south like the mountains.

At first the mountains were rectangular masses, but disintegration has worn them away. And as the basalt is most unequal in its hardness, and as some parts are more exposed than others to the action of the frost-laden winds, and the steady attrition of falling waters, it results that the appearance of these time-worn rocks is most varied and most peculiar. One fact only is constant; the rectangular character of the rock itself. When this assumes, as it very often does, the columnar form, the aspect of the basalt becomes enchantingly interesting. There is hardly a shape under Heaven's dome which it does not mimic, not of course, with any intense resemblance, but there is a something in the outline and the mass which is very suggestive. Of course what is termed constellations is the most frequent, and those who have seen the upper Mississippi must admit that the towers and ramparts of its sandstone cliffs cannot enter into comparison with the terrible basalt formation of the Columbia. There are spots where the rock rises perpendicularly from the water and goes sheer up to a height of three hundred feet in one solid mass without a crack or crevice. This great wall of some Titanic fortification stretches for hundreds of yards in a straight line and then turns abruptly, leaving an acute angle. Lichens, ferns and mosses cover its sides and add to the appearance of a forgotten stronghold that has passed out of the history of the world. Above this great stretch of rampart there is a grassy slope covered with trees, yellow firs and pines. Above that again comes another huge rampart, and more bastions; above that another slope of grass and waving green trees, then another rampart, then another slope, and so in regular graduation until the neck or the enchanted gazer is craned to the utmost, and the eye reaches the crest of the plateau. In the castellated form the basalt is regularly irregular. In other words, it can be more irregular. There is a place along the river where originally there were for the whole sheer descent only two terraces, or, in other words, the lava, instead of spreading itself out in beds, once it began to descend it fell into hollows. The lower of these, being the softer, is very much worn, and disintegration has been exceedingly busy.

ONE OF NATURE'S CATHEDRALS. But in the center of the range there is a mass which suggests strongly a Gothic cathedral. The lady chapel, grotesquely foreshortened, is in front, then above it comes a perfectly shaped spire, with its singular roof, then to the right and left are the projections of the transepts, and above all towers the mighty roof of the nave, with the subordinate aisles. There is nothing to cheat the view as in the basaltic country of Hindostan, so well described by Bishop Heber. No vegetation to help the imagination, no clustering vines to hint the tracery of Gothic decoration. All is the bare basalt, but the masses are so wonderfully suggestive that I doubt if anyone can see it without receiving a singular impression. But the most ordinary form after all is the pyramidical. All will comprehend how readily a solid rectangular mass would by disintegration assume this aspect. The Greeks imagined that the ancient Egyptians endeavored to imitate by their pyramids the ascending flame of sacrificial fires. The Greeks had ever a childish imagination, and this is one of the peculiarly weak examples. They were eager to explain every-

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thing, and they were satisfied with the most ridiculous explanations, Europe was so called after Europa, one of the many loves of Zeus, the Ionians were descended from Io, an other love, and so on. With regard to the Egyptian pyramids we are in a position superior to the Greeks, for we know perfectly well that there were pyramids in Mexico, which may be anterior to those of Egypt. We know, moreover, that many of the decorations believed to be original with the Egyptians belong really to Mexico and Central America. All architects are agreed that the thought of Egyptian architecture, the governing motive, seems to have been derived from a style cognate with that of Palenque and Exmal. Putting these things together, and remembering that Mexico and Central America are distinctly volcanic, may we not believe that both the pyramids of the west and the distant east, nay, even the terraces of the aboriginal Americans were copies of the natural forms of basalt. To copy nature in an early race is, indeed, a difficult thing, but to crystallize an abstract thought into an architectural system, is an impossibility.

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ONE OF NATURE'S CATHEDRALS. But in the center of the range there is a mass which suggests strongly a Gothic cathedral. The lady chapel, grotesquely foreshortened, is in front, then above it comes a perfectly shaped spire, with its singular roof, then to the right and left are the projections of the transepts, and above all towers the mighty roof of the nave, with the subordinate aisles. There is nothing to cheat the view as in the basaltic country of Hindostan, so well described by Bishop Heber. No vegetation to help the imagination, no clustering vines to hint the tracery of Gothic decoration. All is the bare basalt, but the masses are so wonderfully suggestive that I doubt if anyone can see it without receiving a singular impression. But the most ordinary form after all is the pyramidical. All will comprehend how readily a solid rectangular mass would by disintegration assume this aspect. The Greeks imagined that the ancient Egyptians endeavored to imitate by their pyramids the ascending flame of sacrificial fires. The Greeks had ever a childish imagination, and this is one of the peculiarly weak examples. They were eager to explain every-

thing, and they were satisfied with the most ridiculous explanations, Europe was so called after Europa, one of the many loves of Zeus, the Ionians were descended from Io, an other love, and so on. With regard to the Egyptian pyramids we are in a position superior to the Greeks, for we know perfectly well that there were pyramids in Mexico, which may be anterior to those of Egypt. We know, moreover, that many of the decorations believed to be original with the Egyptians belong really to Mexico and Central America. All architects are agreed that the thought of Egyptian architecture, the governing motive, seems to have been derived from a style cognate with that of Palenque and Exmal. Putting these things together, and remembering that Mexico and Central America are distinctly volcanic, may we not believe that both the pyramids of the west and the distant east, nay, even the terraces of the aboriginal Americans were copies of the natural forms of basalt. To copy nature in an early race is, indeed, a difficult thing, but to crystallize an abstract thought into an architectural system, is an impossibility.

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