

a number of old frontiersmen, who were already on the plains in the forties and over the whole length of the Santa Fe trail. They all coincide with Col. Dodge and Mr. Mead; especially Judge T. S. Huffaker, of Council Grove, Kans., a very intelligent gentleman who came in 1846 to the frontier as a missionary and teacher among the Indians, made the same statements, and while preparing this paper, I received the following from him: "When I first came among the Indians, now more than a half-century ago, there were at that time no well defined trails, between the locations of the different tribes, but between the several bands of the same tribe, there were plain beaten trails. Each band had a village of its own, and they continually visited each other. The different tribes would change their location perpetually, and never remain in one location long enough to mark any well defined trails, in going from tribe to tribe."

The conclusions to be drawn from the above statements are:

That there were no permanent trails over the plains, in pre-historic times, as shown by the facts and conditions set forth herein, and there is neither evidence nor tradition for such an assumption. There probably were pre-historic routes, sometimes several miles in width, but no trails, roads or paths, as understood by the use of these words at the present day. In a timbered or mountainous country, the case was different, and pre-historic trails existed.

The assumption of such permanent and well traveled trails, can have its origin only in the brains of imaginative writers, like Inman and Rishey, who are totally unacquainted with conditions and facts existing at the time when the Europeans first came in contact with the Aborigines on the plains of this continent.

This trail matter, historic and pre-historic, shows again the truth of Chas. F. Lummis' assertion: "This is of course out of the whole cloth, another case where persons ignorant of facts and conditions, have been permitted to make what we please to call history."

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Alma, Kans., July 9, 1901.

ABOUT DWARFS.

BY LAWRENCE IRWELL.

It has long been a matter of discussion whether there ever existed any nations which may absolutely be classed as dwarfs. In many ancient writings are mentioned various races of pygmies as inhabiting the cold northern climes of Scythia, or the tropical deserts of Libya and Asia Minor. Aristotle vouches for the reliability of those witnesses who professed to have seen dwarf men and dwarf horses upon the banks of the Nile, and Pliny gives de-

tails of their habits. Herodotus speaks of a race of little men of inky-black color, who inhabited a large city on a river which flowed from West to East Libya, and swarmed with horrible crocodiles. Ctesias, a contemporary of Xenophon, says that he saw in Central India a race of pygmies only two feet in stature; they inhabited a province in which the animals were proportionately small, the sheep being no larger than new-born lambs, and the horses, cattle and asses no larger than a ram. Ptolemy—Claudius Ptolemaeus, the celebrated geographer and astronomer—mentions a "little people" called the Pechinians; he describes them as the inhabitants of a large part of the eastern frontiers of Ethiopia. In later times, an English sailor named Battel, who was taken prisoner by the Portuguese about 1590, and carried into Africa, relates in his adventures that he met with a nation of dwarfs called the "Matimbas." A Dutch traveler, Oliver Dapper, describes a little nation of elephant hunters named the "Mimos," whom he discovered in 1685, inhabiting a district near the Congo river.

Mr. Du Chaillu, writing in 1860, speaks of a strange people of wild habits, whom he found inhabiting a large tract of land in the country of Oshango; they were called "Ovongos" by their neighbors, the Ashangos, with whom they did not marry. The Ovongos were of hideous aspect, their faces being yellow in color. The men were about four feet, five inches in height.

People much under the average stature have been found, in small numbers in southern India and on the island of Madagascar, and they are spread widely over the southern half of Africa where they have been studied in recent years. Their origin is unknown, but they seem to pertain to the Negroid families. Their existence has been periodically reported since the dawn of history, but when the world repudiated the statements of some of the earliest geographers, it rejected the pygmy tribes of whom the ancients wrote, and they were not rediscovered until the second half of the last century. The African dwarfs have been distributed into four, great groups viz:—those who inhabit West Africa, and who live chiefly in the forests. An adult male is usually between four feet, three inches and four feet, seven inches in height. The second group is found in the central regions of Africa, and the individuals composing it are sometimes as tall as four feet, eight inches. The members of this group are nomadic in their habits and are very skilful hunters. The third group lives east of the Nile, but I have been unable to find anything of value concerning the mode of life of the people who compose it. The bushmen who live in the

Kalahari desert, and who range between four feet and four feet, five inches in stature, constitute the fourth group. Our knowledge of all these pygmies is very scanty, but they unquestionably exist.

Mr. A. B. Lloyd has lately published an account of some Congo dwarfs who are short—the men about four feet high—but are much more powerfully built than other Africans. They are broad chested, with muscles finely developed, short thick neck, and small bullet head. Their lower limbs are massive and very strong; their chests are covered with curly hair, and most of the men wear thick, black beards. Each man is armed with a bow and quiver of arrows or with short throwing spears. Around their arms they wear iron rings, and some of them have these around their necks also. The total number of these pygmies is said to be about ten thousand, and their mode of living is very extraordinary. They never cultivate the ground, but wander from place to place, gathering the fruit, nuts, etc., from the trees, and the wild honey. The animals they shoot with their bows and arrows are, of course, used for food. They often follow a wounded elephant for days, shooting into it hundreds of their little iron-tipped arrows, until the poor animal dies from sheer exhaustion. They then make their camp all around the carcass, and live upon the flesh as long as it will last, and then they go away in search of other food. Their method of catching wild pigs and forest antelope is very interesting. Two or three of the more agile of the men are sent into the thicket to search for the animal. These little fellows sometimes climb the trees, and move along the branches from one tree to another, peering down into the dense undergrowth. In the meantime a large net made out of creepers is held in readiness, and men, women, and children arm themselves for the fray, some with sticks, but most of the men have bows and arrows. After a little time, a shrill, birdlike whistle is heard from the forest; it is the signal from the searchers that game has been found. Then the members of the little army noiselessly pick their way through the jungle and the tangled undergrowth, going in the direction of the whistle. When they reach the spot they quietly surround it, each man or woman keeping within sight of his nearest neighbor. The net is fastened to the bushes at one part of the circle, and then when all is ready the whole party commences to shout, at the same time beating the thicket, and very slowly driving all before them into the net, where stand the men with bows and arrows. The antelope or pig is then almost certain to rush into the net, and it is shot through and through by the expert marksmen. This ends the hunt, the dead animal