

SUPERB HUNTING AND FISHING

Exciting Sport Can be Enjoyed in the Sierra Madres in Southern Wyoming.

ALL KINDS OF GAME BUT BUFFALO AROUND THERE.

Elk, Deer and Antelope by Thousands Roam Over a Stretch of Country for 200 Miles.—Ideal Bear Hunting.—Many Streams and Lakes Full of Mountain Trout and Grayling.

SARATOGA, Wyo., June 16.—[Staff Correspondence of THE OMAHA BEE.]—Nowhere else in the United States, at least, is there any locality that possesses such great attractions to the sportsman as the mountain section lying a few miles to the west of Saratoga and which can best be reached from this place.

While these hunting and fishing grounds have become famous in England, their advantages, strange to say, are little known or appreciated by the devotees of rod and gun in our own country. Last season was the first in twenty-five years when noted hunters from across the water failed to put in a couple of months in the Sierra Madres and the region beyond the crest of the great continental divide, on the Pacific slope of the range that forms the western boundary of the Upper Platte valley. After trying their luck in India with the big game of the jungle and in African forests, some of these sportsmen have been to make reconnoiters for returning to their old stamping ground here in Wyoming. Several parties have already been made up in England by old hunters who are anxious to revisit during the present season the scenes of former campaigns. Recruits will be gained from among the members of noted gun clubs in London, whose theories of best success in bagging game in the Sierra Madres have passed into legend.

Not a little interest in this region has been excited among the sportsmen of all England by the posting of the unique wagner of "Al" Huston in the leading clubs of the British metropolis. Mr. Huston is today the best known hunter in this Rocky mountain country. He has offered to let his ranch of 2,000 acres—all under cultivation—together with its improvements and a fine herd of cattle against \$10,000 that he can kill fifty bear in this region in a single season. So far he has found no takers for this extraordinary offer of five to ten times the price he is willing to wager is easily worth \$50,000 at a low estimate.

Mr. Huston never makes any rash statements. He knows what he can do. Coming out here when little more than a boy, he was for many years employed as a hunter by the old Overland stage company. Even in those times he enjoyed the reputation of being one of the bravest and coolest men among the old race of frontiersmen, which is fast becoming extinct, and also a superb shot. No Indian ever knew these mountains as well as Mr. Huston. For a dozen years or more he has had a ranch on Cow creek, eighteen miles below Saratoga, and right under the shadow of the loftiest perch of the continental divide. His home was until the present season the outfitting point for the wealthy Englishmen, who made long journeys from their own homes or distant lands to enjoy under his leadership sport which they assert can nowhere be equalled. But his career as a guide is ended, he declares. No longer has he the fee of \$25 a day, which he received for directing a season's campaign on many occasions in the past, any temptation to him to act as a guide. He would rather see his younger men take his place, although none can be found who will be a comparable substitute. So long as he lives, though, Mr. Huston continues to add to the stories of remarkable hunting trips and wonderful shots which have earned for him his present celebrity as a hunter.

All Kinds of Game Abound. It is unnecessary to enumerate all the kinds of game that can be found in the region referred to. Everything but buffalo abounds. The Upper Platte valley once furnished pasture for countless bison; but they are all gone now. With the settlement of the valley the big bands of elk, antelope, deer and mountain sheep were driven out and across the Atlantic to the Pacific slope of the range, where they now roam by the thousands. Here and there a small and scattered herd can be found on this side of the Sierra, but for the most part they must be looked for in the unsettled country beyond. In the picturesque region a lover of the hunt can be satiated. However ambitious one may be for exciting sport and plenty of it, there is no danger that his fondest hopes or wishes will not be realized. The only condition imposed is that a guide must be taken in order to insure the good fortune of which so many visitors there have been able to boast.

What makes this region especially advantageous is its accessibility from the main travel routes. It is only thirty-three miles from Rawlins on the line of the Union Pacific railway to Saratoga. The trip can be made in a day, and the necessary arrangements can be made at reasonable prices for a long or short period. Plenty of saddles and pack animals can be bought or hired. Good guides make their headquarters at Saratoga and coasts and other men useful for a big expedition can be engaged here.

How to Cross the Range. For a large party composed of those who can afford the time to take things leisurely perhaps the best plan is to transport the necessary camp equipment and provisions to Saratoga. Then the route will lie down the valley on the west side of the Platte as far as Big Creek, which leads up over the mountains to Hahn's Peak. A company has been engaged in extensive mining operations at the Peak for a number of years and haul provisions and other supplies over the mountain. There is little timber all the way up and down the mountain to Hahn's Peak. During the winter there are windfalls but these can be easily cut out. The feed is good the entire distance.

A lot of little creeks along this route are admirably adapted for camping places. Game abounds in these parks and the country is full of antelope for hundreds of miles. Many of them are in the hands of the game warden and increased both the number and size of the bands that had made their home there. It is easy enough to find the antelope you want in that section because the animals visit the big licks sprinkled about the numerous parks. There is only one way for them to get into the parks to gain access to the licks and one to get out. As daily visits are made there, one can time the coming of the antelope, and he is a poor shot who can't bring down one or more of the band as it goes trooping through the passes in or out of the park.

Plenty of Grouse. On the Pacific slope many little scrub oak groves. In the spring the grouse get in among the oaks and strut about so that you can hear them for a long distance. Both the willow and the blue grouse abound there. No more desirable headquarters for a season's sport could be selected than in one of these parks on the Pacific slope where they are larger than on the Atlantic side. The park at the head of the Grand Encampment is one of the largest. There the grouse is remarkably fine and the water which the herons lay their eggs on is of a quality that rivals that found anywhere in the west. For ten miles there is a series of

typical flies or can select from his book one which will pass as a counterpart to deceive the heron, a wig strike of them can be caught.

All the streams on the Pacific slope are full of mountain trout of large size and can be caught ranging all the way from a quarter of a pound to three pounds in weight. In some of the creeks they are more numerous than sheep and much skill is required to land them. While the heron range from six to ten inches or a foot long the trout are larger. There is no lack of fish for a party of campers for no matter what spot is selected for rest or as temporary headquarters, it cannot be far removed from good fishing grounds in the west watered country. It is just the place for a lay man to fish or one who delights in a big score. There is plenty of trout in the number of fish that can be taken from some of the creeks and small rivers. Women in particular are very fond of trying their luck at fishing there because their patience is not taxed too much and the excitement of pulling in the speckled beauties very rapidly is a treat they do not often have an opportunity for enjoying.

But it must not be imagined that because such large trout can be made the conscientious fisherman, who will find it too tame for him to whip the streams. There are places where the trout are big and do not lose their freedom until they have been skillfully handled.

Another fish which abounds is the sucker. This variety is not lettable and the sucker kind and is far more edible. Most of the streams are perpetually fed by melting snows and springs high up the mountains. This makes the water always cold. These conditions apparently have their effect in raising the temperature of the water in the streams and the sucker is in the estimation of those who catch and eat it in that neighborhood.

Picturesque Camp for Fishermen. In choosing a place for pitching a camp a fishing party would be wiser by different considerations than those which influence hunters. They have a greater variety of choice in locations to select from and where the picturesque element can be enjoyed.

One of the most favored places for such parties is at Battle Lake. This has previously been referred to in this paper as the most beautiful little bodies of water in the world. It is a relic of the glacial age and its waters, icy cold and clear as crystal, are held in check by the high mountains. The elevation of 9,000 feet, with the loftiest peak in the Sierra Madres towering above it and forming a perpendicular wall of 2,000 feet high which surrounds it on three sides the aspect is grand and romantic. The water is so pure that the shadows across the mirror-like surface of the pure waters whose depth has never been fathomed. It looks like a vast aquarium. Countless trout can be seen swimming in the water, which extend back to the foot of the cliffs for a distance of a little more than a third of a mile. There are only about three hundred yards across the lake.

Most of the trout in Battle Lake average about five or six inches long. Only a short distance down the creek from the lake there, many are caught which weigh several pounds.

Ever since this section of the country became accessible to pleasure parties the lake has been much frequented. Stories of remarkable catches by women are current which are fully corroborated by the husbands or escorts who have been worn out by their attention to the hook of the feminine anglers. One woman caught a trout in an hour last summer. Another who expressed her husband's time to look after three lines which she kept going all the while. Her score is unknown. The genuine sportsman soon thinks of contenting himself with casting in a pond at a hatchery as to waste his time with such eager nobblers.

Easy to Reach the Pretty Lake. There are no drawbacks in making the trip from Saratoga to Battle Lake. The shortest routes lead over a number of old trails that start in the foot hills ten to twenty miles below this town. To go by one or the other of these routes a party must be guided by a man familiar with the mountains. The trails are pretty good and a stranger is likely to come on a place where he would be perplexed to find an outfit. The annoyances of the trail are due to the fallen timber which blocks the trail at long or short intervals. Years ago the Indians fired the pine forests to drive out the game and the timber has begun to fall. But any guide who is recommended in Saratoga can be depended upon to lead a party with due regard to safety. Some of these routes to which reference has been made were originally made by elk and follow along on the backbone of the mountains. The distance across the range by the elk trails is only eight or ten miles.

The safest plan and the best, provided women are in the party, is to drive to the hamlet of Swan, near the bridge which crosses the Grand Encampment creek twenty miles south of Saratoga. Here the wagon can be left, pack animals loaded and the tent and camp outfit, and the journey resumed over an excellent and easy graded trail which follows the Grand Encampment and Cow creek. This part of the trip must be made on horseback and the distance is about fifteen miles from Swan.

There is another trail which branches off from the highway on the west side of the Platte a few miles below Saratoga, which is the best route to take. The largest and a hunting camp on this route and a substantial log house was built several years ago in a pretty park and there are good springs and pasture for considerable stock at all seasons. How soon this proposed route will be laid off or improved will not yet be determined, but the chance that it will be available so that women could go over it later in the season. In its present condition it is a great party to travel over unless those comprising it are good horsemen.

Besides the proposed short cut the Saratoga people are perfecting plans for a permanent camp at Battle Lake for the accommodation of pleasure seekers. Rustic buildings of a substantial character are being constructed of logs and large enough to afford shelter for many people. Though not definitely settled the prospect that before another season a hotel will be opened in the locality. The construction is likely to begin this year and some sort of provision may be made later on to take care of the people who do not wish to be troubled with a camping outfit of their own.

Short and Picturesque Route. Besides the long detour by way of the Big Creek route, by which wagons can go without a short distance of Battle Lake, there is another and shorter route, which is described in detail because it is more desirable for sportsmen who want to hunt along a big outfit and prefer to take with them the route over the old Cherokee trail can be traveled more quickly than the Big Creek route. Fifteen miles from Saratoga a trail to Jack Creek runs into the old trail over which the Cherokee trail runs. It is a long and picturesque route. Crossing the Sierra Madres by the old bridge pass, through which the old overland route ran, the road follows the Savery river down the slope for four miles and then swings around the mountains.

The streams on the Pacific slope are not as strong as those on the Atlantic side and there is no difficulty in fording those which are crossed on the route. First comes the main creek of the Savery and then the middle fork which was the scene of a great place of excitement several years ago. After passing the Little Sandstone the Big Sandstone is reached. These streams are not far apart and at the dividing water shed are only a little ways apart, the sources of each being within a couple of miles of each other. The Little Sandstone is a tributary of the Big Sandstone, which in turn flows into the Snake. The road to the Big Sandstone leads through a very picturesque scenery. It is only four miles from Battle Lake and Elk Head and other points of interest are within easy stages of the Sandstone. From there to Saratoga the distance is not more than 45 miles and it can be made in a piece at the outside. This estimate does not include luxuries. Fresh vegetables of the finest kind can be procured in the valley. Should a party run short of supplies when in the country on the west side of the range they could stock up easily enough at any one of numerous little stores in the Snake river country. Pack horses can be hired for 50 cents a day and good bargains for the use of saddle horses can be made. Good horses are for sale cheap and it might prove more economical to buy them outright—as prices range from \$30 to \$50—and sell them again at the close of trip.

Not mention at all has been made of the hunting in Medicine Bow range to the east of the Platte valley. That used to be frequented by hunters, but with the advent of prospectors attracted by the rich mineral strikes and a start made immediately on the arrival

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We have just received an invoice of the very finest imported fancy worsted Summer Pants, made as well as any \$15 Pants in the city. They are a regular \$8 Pants, and we will close the lot this week at Five Dollars and Fifty Cents, \$5.50.

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For the same length of time, this week, a stiff Hat rush, we place on sale 1200 Fancy Colored Stiff Hats, including English tan, light brown, nutria colors, etc., in fact all that class of hats in the house at one uniform price of \$1.98 for your choice. That means \$2.50, \$3, \$3.50 and \$4 Hats for a Dollar and Ninety-Eight Cents.

A PICNIC in SHIRTS

Our Neglige Shirts are world beaters. The one we sell for \$1 is better than any \$2 Shirt in Omaha.

HELLMAN'S,

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of a party at Saratoga. J. F. Crawford, secretary of the Saratoga board of trade, can refer any inquires to competent guides, who will plan a campaign and explain all necessary details. One of the best posted men, who served an apprenticeship under Mr. Huston, is "Red" Bennett, a great sportsman with the English hunters and who now runs the Gold Hill hotel here. He can probably get together at shorter notice, the largest and most complete camp and pack outfit any man in the country. There are others who can equip small parties on short notice and even after the arrival here of people who desired to take a trip. The most satisfactory way would be to ship a tent here, because that is the only part of an outfit at all difficult to procure. Most of the tents in the country have been either bought or hired by prospecting parties which outfitted here to hunt for the mineral treasures hidden in the mountains which surround the Platte valley. Those who are at all familiar with mining might find it profitable to do a little business with pleasure by spending a few weeks in the mountains.

He Liked It. "Puck: 'Ah,'" said the editor, as the young author came in, "that last thing was a winner. We were much pleased with it." "Well, in that case," said the author, "I will take back what I said in my letter about not liking the way you treated me, and declaring that I should send you no more of my work." "Oh, that's all right," replied the editor, with heartless cruelty. "That letter was what I referred to."

THE MERRY MAKERS. Briefs from the Billie Billie Banner. At the Constitutional Hill will offer the best inducements in the world for railroads. She has a water tank, any quantity of cattle and one editor who is willing to travel free for the benefit of his health. He hunted in the mountains between Millen creek thirty miles south of Saratoga and French creek farther beyond and had remarkably good success. Last winter he killed a great deal of game both large and small besides getting away with four mountain lions. Much nearer to the town than that on the eastern range, a few days can be put in to advantage by hunters. They must not expect such sport as those who can take the time necessary for a hunt in the Sierra Madres. That is in reality the ideal country for the sportsman.

For Future Reference. New York Recorder: "Let's see!" he mused as he laid his paper down on the bench in Battery park—"I've seen the name before, but I can't place it." "What's the name?" queried his neighbor, "Christopher Columbus." "Why, he discovered America." "That's it—that's it! I knew he did something or other, but just what it was I'd forgotten. I'll put that down and try to remember it, so as to post the folks in Pennsylvania." "You've got a sure thing."

trying to bring in some poetical quotation on the subject, "the idea that to be happy one must be born with a silver spoon in his mouth!" "Any metal would suit me, Robert," she whispered approvingly, "so long as we had ice cream to eat with it!"

The Cumming Game. Denver Sun: First Denver Dude—I say, Cholly, let's go have some games today. Second D. D.—Wilt Gordon Davonshire Brooke Ascott be in it? First D. D.—Y-a-a-s. Second D. D.—Then I won't play. He has a regular prince of Wales set of counters, and he always flips the wrong one over the line. There's going to be a townish schanda about that chapple some day that will shake the wealthy foundations of society.

Those Little Men. Life: Penelope—Men are so rude. Jack—What's anybody been saying or doing to you? Penelope—A man gave me his seat on the car today and never thanked me for taking it.

Enough and to Spare. New York Journal: Inhabited Husband—Shay, is this hot enough for you? Discouraged Wife—Yes, it's not enough for me.