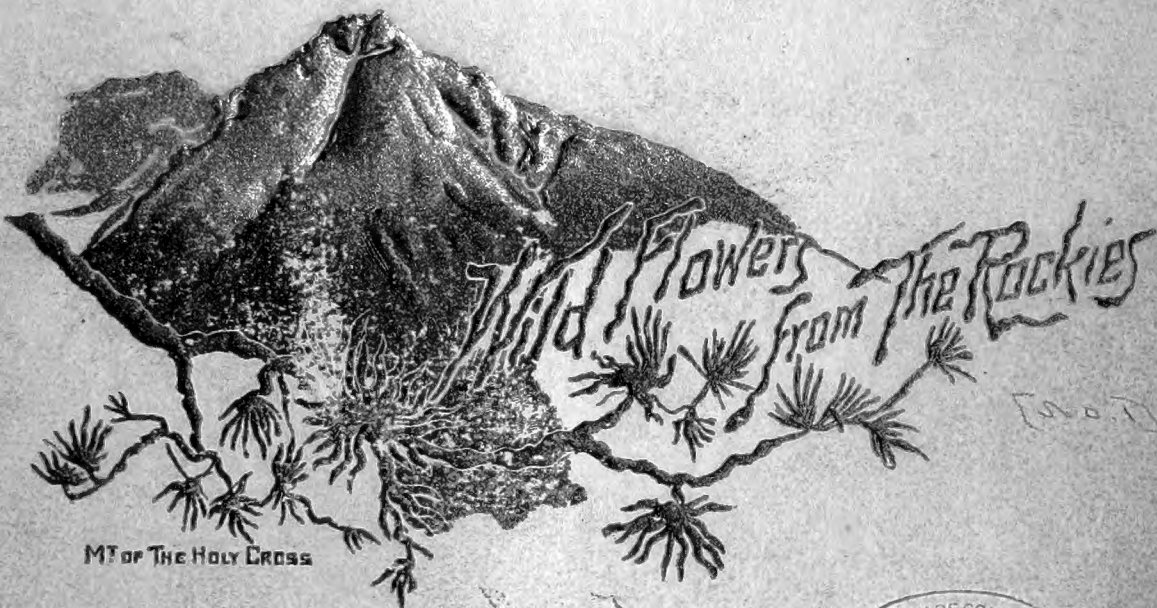


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Mt of the Holy Cross

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FAR to the West, where the cloud navies of the sky seemed to rest their keels upon the earth, was a bank of something wondrously beautiful. The people of the Prairie, who saw it on every sunny day, said that it was the Rocky Mountains. That seemed impossible. Never were the clouds themselves less palpable. At every instant one half expected to see the exquisite mass lift up and float away or break and vanish, like mist that rises above the tree-tops and is instantly dissipated by the morning sun.

The main reason why the spectacle seemed so unreal and unsubstantial was that it defied both logic and the senses. If it resembled anything substantial its features still suggested only what was impossible, for it was like a stupendous mound of turquoise upon which was heaped miles of emeralds, covered at the top with pearls and diamonds, suggesting crystal covered with snow.

All have seen a heavy block of purest ice through which a powerful light is shining, and have noticed the colors that the prisms of the ice develop. Nothing else known to man will suggest how the Rockies looked that afternoon. Yet the thought of miles of clearest ice lighted up by the sun offers only a hint of the scene—the reality was ten-fold as beautiful and lovely.

Think then, O pampered reader, used to rolling through time and distance in cushioned palace cars, what must have been the effect of this sight upon our fathers, the Pioneers, as they jugged toward the Rockies in creaking, hot and dusty prairie schooners in the years ago! The sight gave every one new zest for his task of nation building. It was drink to the thirsty, food to the hungry, spurs to the bare of foot and a saddle to the weary.

Ah! but it was not only this. It was no illusion of a land of promise—no dream that was to vanish when the mountains were reached. To every one the Rockies brought more than they promised. In their vales ran crystal streams, 'neath their trees was cooling shade, fruits and berries rejoiced the wayworn bands, and, while perfect rest was offered, the invigorating air inspired all with increased energy.

To-day the Rocky Mountains still invite the traveler—still reward him. The colors that distance lends them vanish at close approach, but only to reappear, with yet closer familiarity, in such a wealth of flowers that one half suspects it was their blossoms that gave them the gaudy hues they showed. Flowers deck their inclined sides in great blocks of color and litter their terraces and woodland edges in variegated confusion. There is no difficult pass where they are not found, no dusky glen that does not harbor them, scarcely any height on which some will not appear to gladden him who toils to reach the summits.

JULIAN RALPH.





Sultan Mountain on line of the Denver and Rio Grande R. R.





## The Making of the Flowers.

Th hail the Red Man—from none praise—  
As owning poet's bread;  
A dreamer thro' long winter days,  
With song and stozzy breath.  
Tho' blind to Truth, her book he scanned;  
Tho' deaf, he tried to hear.  
Strange as his kind the tales each band  
Passed on from lip to ear.

Hark but to this, by sachem's grave  
To sons of chiefs made known,  
Tho' show those scions zude and brave  
A power beyond their own.  
'Tis legend told of primal days,  
When Manitou, like clay,  
The grey rock mountain shapes did raise  
To celebrate his sway.

He was not pleased. The mountains bare  
Were bleak and dull and grey.  
He watched a rainbow from the air,  
To use its colors gay.  
Gumbling its baz, with charmed spell,  
Their radiant dust he threw,  
And everywhere a radiant fell  
A million flow'ers grew.

JULIAN RALPH.





Fig. 1. The fossil of the Devonian and Permian R.R.









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