

Disinounting, & lifting up the  
edge of the plant, (for it was a single  
plant) a mass of pods was disclosed  
on the underside, about two inches  
long & five eighths of an inch thick.  
On following his example & putting  
one into my mouth, what was my  
surprise to find it filled with delic-  
ious water of a refreshing coolness.  
Though this plant is not plenti-  
ful, it grows at sufficiently conve-  
nient intervals, on these arid  
plains to prevent suffering from  
thirst. Whether animals make use  
of it I do not know, but think it  
not unlikely that such as are  
not carnivorous may refresh  
themselves by eating it. A most  
beautiful provision exemplifying  
the wisdom & goodness of Prov-  
idence in Nature.

and the sudden abruptness with which the traveller sometimes comes upon them gives endless variety and surprise, without changing the appearance of the general contour. On account of the almost constant optical illusion produced by the deflection in the perspective of the plains, together with the refraction of the atmosphere, the judgment is almost constantly in error, not only as to the distance of an object, but also as to its appearance and outline. One may travel for hours directly towards an object, without any apparent diminution of the distance; then, in a little time he may find himself close upon it.

A mountain will at one time appear high, with abrupt perpendicular sides, rising like a rocky island from the waters of a lake or sea, without visible connection with land, while but a short distance of travel will suffice to change it to a low hill, with long, sloping sides, rising but a few feet above the general level of the plains. This is particularly the case if one be travelling on ground that is slightly rising.

Occasionally we come to a more broken country, with high sand-hills; at the summit of these, deep gullies are cut out, apparently by the action of water, but in reality by the wind. This accounts for the clouds of sand one sometimes encounters in traversing these plains. One of these overtook us this afternoon, as we were coming in. Kicking Bird pointed out to me a red haze in the west, exclaiming, "Hoodlety! hoodlety!" (hurry! hurry!), at the same time putting his horse upon