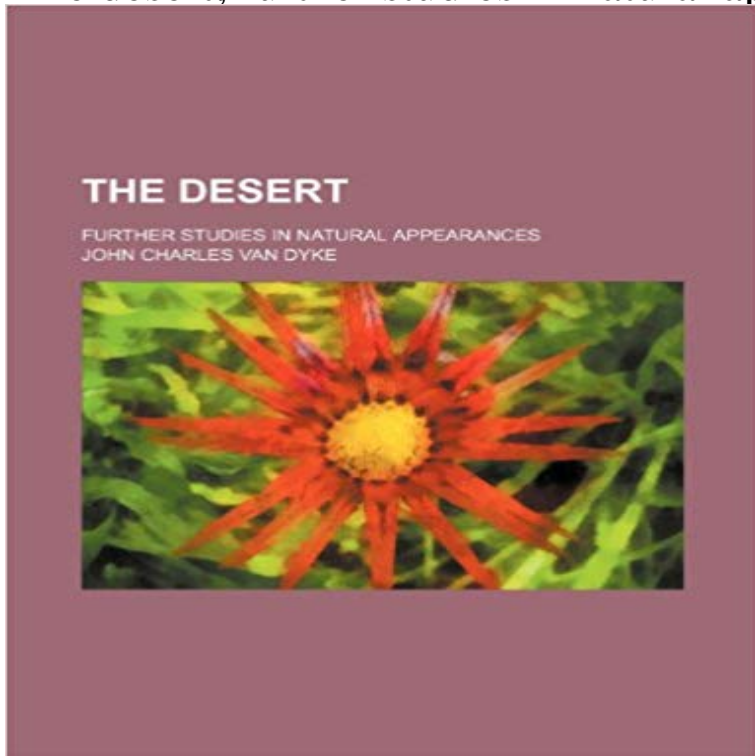


## The desert; further studies in natural appearances



This historic book may have numerous typos and missing text. Purchasers can download a free scanned copy of the original book (without typos) from the publisher. Not indexed. Not illustrated. 1908 Excerpt: ...that air is colorless, that shadows are brown or gray or sooty black, and that grass is green--bottlegreen. The preconceived impression of the mind refuses to make room for the actual impression of the eyes, and in consequence we are misled and deluded. But do the eyes themselves always report the truth? Yes; the truth of appearances, but as regards the reality they may deceive you quite as completely as the mind deceives you about the apparent. And for the deception of the eyes there is no wizard's cell or magician's cabinet so admirably fitted for jugglery as this bare desert under sunlight. Its combination of light and air seem like reflecting mirrors that forever throw the misshapen image in unexpected places, in unexpected lights and colors. What, for instance, could be more perplexing than the odd distortions in the forms and colors of the desert mountains! A range of these mountains may often look abnormally grand, even majestic in the early morning as they stand against the eastern sky. The outlines of the ridges and peaks may be clear cut, the light and shade of the canyons and barrancas well marked, the cool morning colors of the facewalls and foot-hills distinctly placed and holding their proper value in the scene. But by noon the whole range has apparently lost its lines and shrunk in size. Under the beating rays of the sun and surrounded by wavering heated atmosphere its shadow-masses have been grayed down, neutralized, perhaps totally obliterated; and the long mountain surface appears changed appearance as flat as a garden wall, as smooth as a row of mountains. sand-dunes. There is no indication of barranca or canyon. The air has a blue-steel

glow that muffles light and completely wrecks color. Seen through it the escarpments show only du...

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