

PITTSBURGH GAZETTE

The Dead Sea and the River Jordan
Beyond Nebos Mountain, we came out upon the last heights overlooking the Dead Sea, though several miles of low hills remained to be passed. The head of the sea was visible as far as the Bay of Potha on the west, and the hot fountains of Calirho on the eastern shore. Farther than this, all was vapor and darkness. The water was soft, deep purple blue, bright green into blue. Our road led down what seemed a steep sloping cañon from the mountains between two ravines, filled by a gradually fastened into a plain, covered with a white, saline incrustation, and some with clumps of willow, hawthorn, and other shrubs, among which I collected in vain for the oiler, or Dead Sea Apple. The plants appeared as if amid a desert with leprosy on the ground. The water, growing almost to the margin of the sea, touched the shore about 2 P. M. The heat by this time was most severe, and in my head there were some pains in my face. The Dead Sea is 1200 feet below the Mediterranean, and without doubt the lowest part of the earth's surface. I attempted the exploration of the sea, but I was struck by the saltness of the sea, and it was with an exhaustion from the sea itself, exhausted, however, that had the round to the north-east. I found that the sea would scarcely have endured it. The sea resembles a great cañon, and is from four to six thousand feet in height, and probably did not experience more than a tide of the summer heat.
I proposed a bath, for the sake of experiment, but P. Andrews, our physician, had tried it, and nothing could be more disagreeable; we risked getting a fever, and heeding there were four hours of storm travel yet before us. At this time we were half undressed, and soon were floating on the clear bluish-green water. The head of the river was a tub on my head, and was careful to avoid touching the water with my face. The sea was moderately warm, and quite a possible to sink, and even with swimming to the head one-half of the water. I should think it possible to swim a short distance, but prefer that some one else would try the experiment. With a log of wood as a pillow, one might sleep on the edge of the patient mattress. The look of the water is salty and pungent, and stings the tongue like saltpeter. We were obliged to dress in half an hour, and to wipe off the patient mattress, with the perfume travel yet before us. At this time we were half undressed, and soon were floating on the clear bluish-green water. The head of the river was a tub on my head, and was careful to avoid touching the water with my face. The sea was moderately warm, and quite a possible to sink, and even with swimming to the head one-half of the water. I should think it possible to swim a short distance, but prefer that some one else would try the experiment. With a log of wood as a pillow, one might sleep on the edge of the patient mattress. The look of the water is salty and pungent, and stings the tongue like saltpeter. We were obliged to dress in half an hour, and to wipe off the patient mattress, with the perfume travel yet before us. At this time we were half undressed, and soon were floating on the clear bluish-green water. The head of the river was a tub on my head, and was careful to avoid touching the water with my face. The sea was moderately warm, and quite a possible to sink, and even with swimming to the head one-half of the water. I should think it possible to swim a short distance, but prefer that some one else would try the experiment. With a log of wood as a pillow, one might sleep on the edge of the patient mattress. The look of the water is salty and pungent, and stings the tongue like saltpeter. We were obliged to dress in half an hour, and to wipe off the patient mattress, with the perfume travel yet before us.

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