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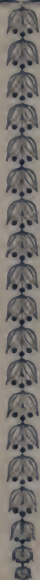




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# A Canuck

Down  
South

BY  
ARTHUR WEIR.



... A ...

# CANUCK



## DOWN SOUTH

BY...

ARTHUR WEIR

1864-

—



MONTREAL :

PRINTED BY JOHN LOVELL & SON

1898

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TO

T. G. RODDICK, Esq., M.P. M.D.C.M.  
L.L.D., &c.

My friend, I set it down with pride,  
“ My Friend,” without whom I had died,  
You, one of Nature’s tireless police,  
Who sent me forth, the Golden Fleece  
Of health to find, will find herein  
How I that priceless boon did win.  
And, as my humble work you read  
With patience (patients are your meed)  
Before you reach the end, you may  
Regret you bade me haste away.  
If not, and you are glad to find  
My health more robust than my mind,  
And if the volume pleases you,  
Take it—it is not half your due.

A. W.

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ready).





## CHAPTER I.

### ON THE TRAIL OF THE VOYAGEUR.

---

When my friends heard that I was ordered south for the winter, they remembered not mine offences. One estimable lady sent me a tract on Sudden Death, and a bachelor friend came forward with a bottle of his favorite Scotch. It was evident that both found in me a lack of spiritual consolation, which they proffered according to their lights. A third friend termed my physicians quacks because they had not adopted a certain system of treatment, and a fourth called them quacks because he thought they had. Within a week I had prescriptions enough from non-professionals to establish a druggist in trade, and there was not a health resort on

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the face of the globe that some one did not beseech me to go to and some one else with equal vehemence appeal to me to avoid.

It would only renew the controversy were I to state why certain places were rejected. We decided upon California because there we would have no unbearable heat nor dangerous fevers, because we had known its curative power in the case of one dear to us, and because there, across three thousand miles of continent, faces awaited us expectantly that we had never hoped to see again, the face of Diogenes among them. The last consideration went for much with my physicians, who knew that cheerfulness is the best tonic and welcome comradeship better than hypodermics.

The Princess sent for her mother, who enjoys the privilege of being my mother-in-law. Only a base mind would suggest that this was for the purpose of reconciling me to leaving the country, my mother-in-law being among the few who see none but my good points. She is so pretty and so nice in every way

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that, if needs were, I could without regret treat her as Max O'Rell tells me he treated his in earlier days.

"My wife," said that witty Frenchman, "invited her mother to visit us when we were but a week back from our honeymoon. Do you think I objected? Not I; I said her presence was necessary to complete my happiness, at which my wife raised her eyebrows. My mother-in-law came, and I did not neglect her, as some men would have done. I took her to concerts, theatres—with a petit souper afterwards—and, in the afternoons, for long drives. And I left my wife at home. In one little week my mother-in-law had departed for her charming home, and I have not seen too much of her since. My wife looks after that. She has great tact, I have none."

My mother-in-law came, and she and the Princess began rifling the house like experienced burglars, stood upon their heads in trunks, gave me long lists of articles to be brought from town, and discussed blasses, blouses, reverses and what not, until from being the centre of

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the projected fitting I sank to such insignificance that I began to fear that I would be accidentally left behind unless I packed myself away in a band-box.

The day before we left I came home and found the two sitting beside a pile of trunks, with that contented look upon their faces which a good woman wears when she has crammed the last movable thing in the house into the last possible corner of her trunk. I said:

“Are you sure you are leaving nothing behind?”

“Nothing.”

“Six trunks, about 150 pounds each, say seven hundred in all. Do you know that it will cost us over thirty-five dollars for extra baggage?”

“What!!!”

“We are allowed 150 pounds of baggage to each ticket, that’s three hundred, and we pay nine cents per pound for the rest. Is my calculation approximately correct?”

I thought I was having my revenge for their neglect and I enjoyed the situation;

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that is, until the Princess spoke. She said:

"Well, of all the useless men—why didn't you tell us that a week ago?"

I knew better than to argue with my mother-in-law there. I merely said, with a fine sarcasm, that was utterly thrown away:

"Don't see what you can take, but what you can leave behind." And then I fled. I was an invalid, and those two women might have wanted me to help them pack.

Tearfully, and with many protests against the iniquity of railroad monopolies the Princess and her mother began their task anew, and actually managed to leave out a few pounds. Much of the rest, consisting of household linen, cutlery and books a cranky student thought he could not do without (I didn't mention my name, did I?) we ultimately decided to box up and send as freight at about one-third the cost. This is a great scheme, and I do not charge anything for making it public. By all means, if you are ever going to

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California, and have extra baggage, send it by freight, and you will probably get it again in time to ship it back, if you have any luck. Our boxes were three months getting to California, and they did not go tourist, either. They got as far as the States in pursuance of Horace Greeley's advice, and then some brilliant intellect ordered them back to Toronto because a man with a name like mine had lost one trunk somewhere between Parkdale and Kalamazoo, or some other points equally on the line to California, and although he said my boxes were not his trunk, that they were consigned neither from nor to the same place as his trunk, the intelligent freight agent at Parkdale, or wherever the boxes lay, kept them, either because he thought the man would take them as a compromise, or because the freight hadn't been paid on them back from the States, or for some reason too deeply seated in the grey matter he called his brain, for common mortals to comprehend. Anyway, it never seemed to have entered his head that he had any reason to send them on

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to their destination as speedily as possible, with perhaps an apology. After we arrived in California and began to worry the company about the boxes, we never ceased to have a source of interest and the occasion for a walk to the post office. We had letters from the general manager down to the office boy in Montreal, letters from Port Huron, letters from Los Angeles, from the Custom's houses, from the Secretary of State, the British consul, the Ambassador at Washington, and the Foreign and Colonial secretaries at London. At least, if we didn't have them, we might have had them for the writing. We did get some of these, referring to "yours of the —th," "Please refer to our No. 117-459A, in replying," and so on. Sometimes we would hear that the boxes had been located at one place (whence they had started) sometimes at another, then the next letter would take it all back and inform us that the boxes would be immediately enquired after, as though that was the first the railroads had heard of them. There were four systems



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over which the boxes had to pass, and each railroad was feverishly hunting after them. Sometimes we'd hear of a hold up on the line and the Princess was sure the boxes were stolen, next there would be an accident, of course the boxes must be in it, and so forth. Ultimately telegrams began to pour in, and the last one declaring that they had at last been located at Toronto arrived five minutes after they had been deposited on the station platform under the palms at Santa Anita. Next to getting freight through on time is the fun of hunting it up when it fails to connect. By all means send your belongings to California by freight, if you desire an interest in life and have a few months to live. In justice to the company, I must say this took place some years ago. Matters are much better now, and freight reaches California within three weeks.

In undertaking any long journey the traveller had best act upon the adage already quoted to leave what he can behind, and to remember that it is usually as cheap and far more convenient to



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make his purchases not where he is, but where he is going. This is particularly true of long railway journeys. We found California prices on the average quite as reasonable as prices in Canada. As to clothing, baggage and like matters on the overland train, they will be mentioned in the proper place. I will merely premise that we acted on the principle that the holding of one section did not entitle us to overflow into a second.

The day of departure came at last. I think women always laugh in their sleeves when they hear man styled the lord of creation. We were going to California for my health, and I should have been the most important one in the party. With the exception of a brisk stag party in town the day before as my debilitated frame could enjoy, I was not in it, as the phrase is. The woman hung about the Princess's neck. There was not enough of her to go round, but when I meekly expressed my willingness to supply the deficiency I was grandly scorred. I was, however, permitted to get on the train at the far end of the

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procession, for which I was truly thankful.

I waited for the blue to shine again through the rain that dimmed the Princess's eyes; then I said:

“Considering that I am expected to die and go to heaven and never see them again, those girls might have said good-bye to me.”

The Princess said:

“Mother did not forget how sick you are.”

“What did she say :”

“She said I always did look pretty in black.”

Et tu Brute.

\* \* \* \* \*

The train had stopped for us by special request at Lachine, where we had been sojourning, Lachine the old Voyageur depot, whence these bold and energetic men ventured by canoe and snowshoe into the distant wilds of the far West, peopled by savage Indians, the bison and the bear. Not far from the station whence we embarked still stands the old Hudson Bay fort, and yonder

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lake that is gleaming through the autumn-tinted foliage has rippled many a time and oft beneath the blade of paddle or of oar, as with song and chorus the picturesque voyageurs bent to the stroke, en route for the far reaches of the Ottawa or the equally tumultuous rapids of the Upper St. Lawrence. We are at Ste. Anne almost before we are well settled in our luxurious seats, and here are the dashing surges that Tom Moore sung of, on whose unbrageous brink the voyageurs made their first bivouac upon their western journey. Alas, the voyageur is gone, and his place is filled by yonder wood-scow sailor man, who sits, smoking his clay pipe, upon the long tiller, while drowsy horses draw his craft through the lock. We are on the trail of the voyageur, and shall follow it for some thirteen hundred miles. He was months on the route; we shall do it easily in sixty hours, and have time to see Chicago.

We began our journey a little after nine in the morning, and all through the daylight hours were speeding through a

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fertile and prosperous country towards Toronto. Hamlets, towns and villages, with now and then a city, rose on the horizon, approached, received us and receded along the narrowing lines of steel. Forests and meadows and low hills, with at times glimpses of the silver river rushing down to its tryst with the sea, fields where the yellow wheat had waved and been cut down, fields where cattle browsed, still making food for Britain's hungry millions, flashed upon us, and at times we saw the smoke of manufactories in the distance, hives of industry, reached by these same bands of steel, or tributary lines. Above us shone the clear October sun through air just touched with frost, not cold but bracing, so bracing that even I, who knew the rigor of the approaching winter wondered why I should be compelled to leave so fair a land, so fine a climate.

How different it all was from what we were shortly to see. Here old mother earth's brown ribs do not lie bare to the sweep of wind, she is still clad in a

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mantle almost green. Here is no parched soil, thirsting for the rain that never comes, every farmstead has its winding stream. Some even have their limits set by majestic rivers whose volume changes not but is fed unfailingly the whole year through by brooks and tributaries that gather the water drops among still primeval forests and Laurentian lakes silent and solitary amid the hills of gneiss.

If it was a land surveyor with a well thumbed copy of the *Odyssey* who gave the State of New York its Utica, Troy and other classical names, to what epic do we owe the names of the stations and towns along the five hundred miles of Canadian territory between Montreal and Sarnia? Shall we call it the epic of life? Here we have Lachine, the record of La Salle's dream, Vaudreuil, the last French Governor of Canada, Iroquois, name of dread import, Lansdowne, a recent Governor, Colborne, Grafton, Newcastle, Hamilton, great names all, dear to Canadians. Brockville, named after our immortal general,

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we salute thee. Push on, like him and his brave York volunteers. But stay, surely we are no longer in Canada, but rather in some reconstructed Europe, where the lion lies down with the lamb ! Here are Breslau, Berlin, Petersburg, Baden and Hamburg, with Paris not far off. O Kaiser Wilhelm ! is this fair town your capital, and where is Unter den Linden ? And thou, O Czar, we can give you snow and ice and jingling bells in their season, but neither serf nor nihilist. Beyond Hamburg what comes ? Who but Shakespeare, only six miles away, with visions following as a matter of course, of Stratford, St. Paul's, St. Mary's, London and the Thames.

The voyageur did not thread the pathless woods, but preferred the river, notwithstanding the foaming cataracts at the Cascades, Cedars, Coteau and Long Sault, to say nothing of the scattered rapids above. What though he spent days in the toil, now in, now out of the canoe, the swirling torrent pouring shoulder high about his stalwart form, were there not calm reaches, with gentle

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current, bright with water lilies, where the trees bent down to touch the mirroring crystal and the deer defiled through wooded lanes. Were there not moonlit nights' when he might lie under the gleaming stars beside the roaring camp fire, upon a couch of freshly cut pine boughs, odorous and soft, and spin his yarns of Indian battles, strange discoveries in the wilderness and deeds of heroism and skill in rapids where jagged rocks stood eager to rip the canoe open in a brutal hari-kari. Ah, we like the luxury of the Pullman, but apart from the saving of time, I sometimes question whether our forbears did not enjoy quite as much luxury as we, with all our modern improvements.

The voyageur was an employe of the fur company, the descendant of the courier de bois. We shall be in the haunts of these men as far as the Missouri, and they often ventured far beyond. In Kansas we shall traverse territory full of Canadian romance. On our route we could pass through towns, such as Detroit, which were founded by Montreal-



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ers, shall follow or cross old portage paths, such as at Toronto, where there was a portage long before there was a settlement, a portage that gave its name to the town that was first named York. We shall pass Kingston, outlet of a series of lakes and rivers long used by the Indian and now the Rideau canal, built as a military work by the British Government, under the supervision of Lt.-Col. By, perhaps the only large canal ever built in which the engineer-in-chief could complain that he had only one theodolite, and that not a good one. In this well fortified harbor have rotted large ships of war, built in England, brought over in sections and carried up the river by the voyageurs past thirty miles of rapids, at a cost in some cases of over sixty thousand dollars. But, shade of President Jefferson, they helped to disappoint you in the campaign, of which you had said "the conquest of Canada will be only a matter of marching." Gentlemen of Detroit, we do not grudge you those captured cannon with grandiloquent inscription in



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front of your city hall; you have the cannon, we held your city; and so are quits. Yonder monument in the blue distance, within sound of Niagara, is it not on Queenston heights? Brother Johnathan you are a brave man, and a determined, but you have found this northern thistle somewhat stinging in your grasp, and I fancy that it was not fear but respect and perhaps a little family pride that always made you draw back and not put your whole heart and hate and power into the blows you dealt us. Not so easily were you driven back or discouraged in your own great war, where your conscience was with you, as it has never been in any attempt upon your northern brother.

We reached Toronto late in the evening, and the customs officer with great courtesy examined our baggage, which the railroad officials with equal courtesy dragged from the luggage van. We had no claim on these offices as our trunks should either have been examined at Montreal before starting or have waited for the regular examination at dead of

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night at Port Huron. And then the train went on, and we escaped the danger of an experience the like to which for stagnation and petty, narrow annoyances bred largely of religious or rather theological intolerance, is, I am sure, not to be found elsewhere on the continent, nor anywhere in history since the days of the Commonwealth of England or the blue laws of the New England States; I mean, of course, a Sunday in Toronto, where the street cars were stopped and a man could do nothing but sit still and grow, and not make any noise about it either. Toronto is the place where truly good people do not let their hens lay nor their cows give milk on a Sunday, and have a sincere regret that the Creator did not so arrange their anatomy as to make their heart and lungs cease working during the twenty-four hours.

Toronto has dozens of connections by rail and water with all parts of the country; time was when the legislature could not assemble there for lack of communications. Within the memory of living men a walk from Toronto to

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Montreal was a recognized way of making the journey, and people still talk of the wonderful stage journey made by Lord Sydenham in 1840. It was truly a record breaker. At six o'clock on Monday morning, February 18th, the four in hand started, William Weller on the box. What visions the name alone conjures up! All day the light sleigh glided along, now crisping the snow, now drawn over bare roads or through mud where the February thaw had done its work. Noon came, and night, the tired horses were replaced by others at frequent intervals, and still Mr. Weller held the ribbons. Darkness covered the face of the country the stars came out amid flying clouds, and in all the circle of the horizon there was nothing seen but the naked trees and the flying ground, and nothing heard but the musical beat of the hoofs of the flying steeds. Immovable, wrapped in his great coat, the sleepless driver sat, till, at twenty minutes to six on Tuesday afternoon, he threw down his reins in the yard of the Exchange Hotel on St. Paul street,

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Montreal, and was helped from the box where he had sat for thirty-five hours and forty minutes and guided his galloping horses over three hundred and sixty miles of mother earth. Ben Halliday wasn't "in it," Hank Monk, who drove Horace Greeley and jolted the buttons off his coat, made no such record as William Weller, and I, who am going where Hank Monk is still talked of, am proud to place our Canadian record in evidence.

Canadians are lacking in one thing for which the United Statesian is noted, the art of advertising. I do not believe that there is any country which has done so much as Canada, and at the same time talked of it so little, unless it be our motherland, and her natives make up for this by an air which plainly denotes that, if they do not boast of one achievement, it is because they are perfectly convinced of their superiority in all directions. Montreal was the first harbor in the world to be lighted by electricity. Canada sent the first ocean steamship on her voyage, has the most extensive railway

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system in the world under one management, the most stupendous canal system the world has ever seen, the finest banking system. She has more ocean shipping than the United States, which could not have even what it has but for the sailors it draws from Newfoundland and Canada. Canada had to lend her voyageurs to ensure the success of the Nile expedition, her oarsmen have been and her yachtsmen are world's champions. She has had the strongest man in the world, and my lady friends say she has the hardsomest. She has civil servants who think nothing of making expeditions that Franklin or Nansen would have written a book on, and they send in only about a printed page. She has mounted police who keep in order Indians the United States permits to massacre standing armies. She has gold mines that surpass those which produced the forty niners. She has wheat fields that rival those of Russia, she has the highest mountains, the noblest glaciers, the most fertile plains, and the most majestic rivers on the continent. She has

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climates that equal those of the champagne country or Siberia; she has coasts more wonderful than the Norwegian fjords. She has the deepest river and the oldest mountains in the world, and her shores witnessed the dawn of life. Her history should be the envy of nations. The stand at Thermopylae was a rout compared with Dollard's stand on the Ottawa; the legendary founding of Rome is prosaic compared with that of Montreal. Even the defence of Lucknow is paralleled in Canada, and by a woman at that, Madame de la Tour, who woman-like afterwards married her enemy—and perhaps was duly avenged. Our poets have no living superiors in the United States and but few in Great Britain, our statesmen have been a match for those of the United States, the most overbearing and grasping in the world; we have lent other countries men who have added lustre to their annals. Fenwick Williams, of Kars, is one. We have had singers like Albani, sculptors like Hebert, musicians like Deseve,—but why prolong the list. I have not men-

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tioned the title of what entitles Canada to respect among nations, but if we do not show pride ourselves who is going to proclaim our virtues? It is not so long since I read an immigration pamphlet, published by the Quebec Government. There was not one particle of fine writing in it, scarcely even a reference to our cities. There were statistical tables, there were no pictures of wonderful beets, of lader. fruit trees, of charming landscapes. no attempt whatever to root the intending settler to the soil, or weave around him the glamor of our history and our institutions. To read that pamphlet, one would imagine that Canada was still a wilderness. What is it but the lack of proper advertising that even to this day leaves the average Briton under the impression that the grizzly bear wanders through the suburbs of Montreal and that he who returns home late at night in Toronto may be found scalped on his own doorstep in the morning : I myself have seen in the London Times the announcement that the Governor-General embarked at



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Ottawa on the steamship for England, and I have frequently seen British letters addressed Montreal, Canada, United States. Fellow Canadians, modest like myself, I pray you for the love of your country, do not hide her light under a bushel. Go through the United States west, see the parched deserts, swept by cyclones, that are advertised as the finest grazing lands in the world, mark the dead and dying cattle on the plains, which have neither food nor drink, see the gaunt hollow-eyed Britisher who tries to live on an ash heap a thousand miles from anywhere; and advertise, advertise, advertise, if only for the sake of humanity.

Here is a sample of the average Englishman.

“Bai Jove, you Canadians awre qwite right to make a law against scalpers’ tickets. It fweezes ma blood, bai Jove, to think that some blasted Indian may murder me fow ma ticket, and then sell it, you know.”

My mind slowly returned to sublunary affairs. There were voices outside



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the car window, the cars shunted, engines coughed and panted, and we slowly went forward. I looked out, and there was a faint twinkle of lights in the darkness, and then a curtain of utter gloom was drawn over the window, while a strange subterranean rumble came to my ears. My mind, only half awake, reverted to trips to the Portland coast through the portals of the Victoria Bridge, and then as the rumbling continued, and no sudden and brief flash of light came, such as one notes in passing through that tunnel in mid-air, each time a pier is reached, it slowly dawned upon me that we were passing through the tunnel from Sarnia to Port Huron, under a tide which upbears a more voluminous shipping than passes even through the Suez Canal. Here is another little unadvertised work of Canadians, compared with which the famed Hoosac Tunnel (also built by Canadians, it may be mentioned), is but a mole hole. The St. Clair Tunnel is nearly two miles in length; the Hoosac Tunnel is only 2504 feet; the St.

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Gothard Tunnel is  $9\frac{1}{4}$  miles; but there is none in America to compare with the St. Clair, and none anywhere so extensive which is carried under water, if we except the insignificant water-pipe which Chicago carried out into Lake Michigan to draw a supply that is not polluted by the sewerage of that wicked and progressive city.

We were due to arrive in Chicago somewhere about ten in the morning, but we did not draw up at Dearborn Station until after two on Sunday. By that time I stood in need of a shave. I would not mention this insignificant detail, only that my search for a barber revealed the strange fact that the skin game is not played in Chicago on that day of the week. At least I thought so until, as I was returning to the depot, I was stopped by a gentlemanly-looking man, who drew me confidentially aside.

"Sir," he said; "excuse my addressing you, but I have just received a telegram that my mother is dying in New York, and I have nothing but my gold watch.

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Now, if you will take the watch—it is worth sixty dollars—and give me twenty-five, my dying mother's blessing will rest upon the man who enables her son to reach her bedside."

All is not gold that glitters in Chicago.

A few moments later, a well-dressed man rushed up to me and shook me violently by the hand.

"Well," he said; "this is a sight for sore eyes. How did you ever come here, John J. Aitkins, of Indianapolis? I haven't set eyes on you for three years."

I said:

"I'm really very sorry, but my name's not Aitkins, and I never was in Indianapolis. My name's Blodgett, Isaac K. Blodgett, and I come from Australia. I'm going to the Alaska gold mines."

With profuse apologies, and the assurance that I was like enough to John Aitkins to be his twin brother, my new friend left me. Some time later, when I was looking for a cab to drive about the city, I was again seized by the hand.

"Well, I never. Can this be Blodgett,

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my old friend Isaac Blodgett? What on earth brought you to Chicago. And how are all the folk in Australia? I bet you're coming here to dabble in our Alaska mines. You know me, of course? I tell you now, you don't get out of this town without seeing the elephant. How do you do? I'm just wild at meeting you!"

"Excuse me," I said, "I'm very sorry, but my name is not Blodgett, and I never was in Australia. My name's Aitkins — John J. Aitkins, of Indianapolis."

The effusive gentleman looked at me a moment. Then his left eye closed spasmodically, in what looked suspiciously like a wink, and he left me suddenly.

We had a poor meal in the station restaurant, and a good deal of billingsgate from the lady in attendance on the women and children's waiting-room (I hope I have her title right, or she will probably exercise her tongue further), and then we set forth to see the sights.

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From the roof of the Masonic Temple, twenty-one stories high (302 feet), a fair, if confused, idea is had of the city. Lake Michigan rolls its green waters on the one hand, and everywhere else are vast buildings and interminable streets, dimly seen, even on that Sunday afternoon, through the smoke that seethes and billows over the whole town, quenching the sunlight and making everything look like a Dutch picture. Pork packers have discovered the secret of the old masters, such is civilization. We were still on territory pre-empted by Canadians. The town is full of them now, and in the ages past here came Jean Nicolet, and crossed to the Mississippi. Here came LaSalle and Marquette; here waved the fleur-de-lys, and here the mass was sung. Earlier still, an extensive trade was here, a trade terminated so long ago that we learn of it only through excavations in Ohio mounds, yet it extended north, east, south and west, almost to the confines of the continent.

A little before ten that evening two

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very tired adults and two still more tired children, boarded the Atcheson, Topeka & Santa Fe California Limited, bribed the porter to make up their berths, and slept a sleep that Argus might have coveted.





## CHAPTER II.

### ACROSS THE PRAIRIE.

"It is all changed now," said the Argonaut; "time was when out West a pistol-pocket was imperatively necessary. To-day we only require a pocket-pistol."

"Man always has a want," moralized the Capitalist.

"Especially if he is a Britisher," said the Tail-twister.

"If it were not so," remarked the Lieutenant, with a sly smile, "our friend, the Capitalist, would lose his vocation."

I said nothing, nor did the other tenderfeet offer a word. We had had our innings as far west as the Missouri, but since leaving Kansas City modesty had fallen upon us, which was rather a strange sensation.



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The Argonaut was an elderly man now, one who had borne the brunt of early California days (they don't say Californian in California). He did not speak much—he belonged to days when a loose tongue was fatal, unless hung on a hair trigger—and when he did make a remark, it was epigrammatic as that of the derringer that had swung at his belt in the early fifties, and like that weapon, it usually let daylight through the subject, as, for example, the remark quoted above.

We were on the Santa Fe California Limited, rolling through Kansas, in the sunshine of a late October day,—Kansas dear to Canadians through its close association with our early fur-trading days, interesting to scientists as an ancient sea-bottom, and the cemetery of geological monstrosities, valuable to the Capitalist through its wealth of gypsum and marbles, and hallowed in the eyes of the Argonaut as the portal through which a generation ago he had sought the New West.

Our travelling companions were near-



### *Across the Prairie.*

ly all typical. There was the Argonaut, going back for some unknown purpose to his early home; the Capitalist, with a new scheme in which to sink British capital, to which he had promised the extraction of sunbeams from cucumbers, or the turning of cactus deserts into ranch lands. There was the Tail-twister, narrow, uneducated, save in the affairs of his own country, and still bitterly remembering the days of 1776, which, he thought, formed a live issue yet in the policy of the two great nations. There was the Lieutenant, re-joining his company in some far-away fort among the Indians; and there were a few stalwart ne'er-do-wells, who had been shipped from England with a little money to retrieve their fortune and their fame, and who would probably end their days on a little fruit ranch high on the Sierra sides, mortgaged to the roof-tree, their ambition crushed by the dreamy, cloudless climate and disappointment.

Alas, there were also others in high hopes, doomed to extinction,—others

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with flushed cheeks and transparent hands, with a racking cough, for which they were seeking ease and cure by fleeing the wintry blasts of the east. Some were alone, but several had relatives to share their exile; and, as I looked upon them, I thought myself, indeed, an invalid no longer, for among the blind the one-eyed man is king.

But, such is the buoyancy of hope and the restorative power of change of scene and interest, that we were one and all the jolliest set of invalids ever seen. Cleopatra may have wept on Antony's shoulder as she heard the melancholy "Remember, thou art mortal," and Caesar may have flinched at the phrase ere he went to his unexpected death; but, though there were few among us to whom those words might not significantly have been addressed, and notwithstanding that we knew the fatal yellow lantern might at any moment flash out the sad intelligence of death or mute cry for medical aid through the night, as we rushed past the stations, we laughed and talked,

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full of hope and seemingly heedless of the progress of the dread malady, to arrest which we had said farewell to friends and home, some of us for ever.

One night, long after every one had retired, I went to the wash-room to dilute a little water with whiskey. Instantly, the recumbent porter sprang to his feet, and asked if I wanted assistance. As there was not much water in the mixture, I replied that I thought that I could manage to get the better of it myself, whereupon he sank back restfully, saying: "I thought some one was dying." That was a decided shock to me. It was disagreeable to have forced upon one in so strong a manner the fact that there might be a familiar face missing some morning; but, as indicating the hopefulness of consumptives, it would have been ludicrous had it not been pathetic, to see how anxiously each far-gone invalid asked his companions how they had rested during the night. He saw the mote; he could not see the beam.

But it must not be thought that our

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Pullman was an hospital. It is not often that, even on such trains, the dread ma'ady is brought too forcibly before the eye. It is more frequently so on the east bound trains, when some heart yearns homeward for a sight of haloed scenes, and contests every inch with death until the last sad wish has been accomplished. Our evenings in the smoking-room were among the pleasantest experiences of my life, and interesting as were the glimpses of life and scenery from the car windows, they were surpassed when the taciturn Argonaut or the Lieutenant could be lured into conversation.

From the instant we had crossed the Missouri, the Argonaut had been exhibiting a suppressed excitement.

"I know the signs," said the Capitalist. "He's got the fever on him again. We're going over the old Santa Fe trail, and the love of California and the lust for gold have him once more, as forty years ago. He'll break out soon, and then you'll have some idea of the kind of boys that made the biggest half of this country."

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That evening, after I had superintended the packing of the "enfant terrible" of our party in the "top drawer," as he persisted in calling the upper berth of our section, much to the porter's disgust, I entered the smoking-room. The Capitalist winked at me, and nodded towards the Argonaut, who sat in the most comfortable corner. Then he began to hum:

I soon shall be in Frisco,  
And then I'll look all round,  
And when I see the gold lumps there  
I'll pick 'em off the ground,  
I'll scrape the mountains clean my boys,  
I'll drain the rivers dry,  
A pocket full of rocks bring home;  
So, brothers, don't you cry.

The Lieutenant and Tail-twister took up the refrain:

Oh! California!  
That's the land for me.  
I'm bound for San Francisco,  
With my washbowl on my knee.

The Argonaut roused himself. "The railroad's good enough for California," he said; "for it can't take you any

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further unless you want to swim. But it's killed the country between. Time was when the whole overland trail was settled and busy. Once I counted nigh five hundred teams within nine miles. From the Missouri to the Pacific there was one long procession. Twenty thousand people started in one body from Fort Laramie, in May, 1849. Some got to the very Sierra and turned back; some got left in the desert and stayed there, and when the cholera caught up with us,"—

Here the old man stopped, and the Tail-twister broke in: "It's the Britishers," he said. "They wanted California then, and they want it now. Look at them to-day. There isn't a horse in Los Angeles or Pasadena that hasn't its tail docked; there isn't a dinner-plate that was made outside of England. They sent the cholera then, and they come out here now, and put their money into everything—"

"Hear, hear," cried the Capitalist, smiling over some merry recollection of some such investment, in which the money had doubtless remained.

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"And then they think they should be elected mayor or alderman, or be put on the police force. Confiscate 'em, I say."

We side-tracked the Tail-twister with some difficulty.

"It seems to me," said the Lieutenant, "that travelling this way is better than by prairie schooner, and quicker."

"It's different," replied the Argonaut; "but it's roughing it in another way. Here we are cooped up day and night, without a chance to stretch our legs, except for a few minutes at a station; no sport, held up by the porter whenever we speak to him, blackened by train smoke, blinded by dust, and have to wear a boiled shirt and high collar in all the heat, just because some lady with her lap-dog is on board, and doesn't want the dog's manners contaminated. Give me the old schooner, plenty of time and grub, and a good horse. What's your hurry in this world? You young fellows want to get there as soon as you have started; you might as well want to be born bald-headed and with



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spectacles. It's what comes between the beginning and the end that makes lie. And, as for space! Why, sir, many a prairie schooner was almost as big as this car, and the outfit often cost over \$5,000. I have seen \$8,000 paid for the schooner alone, and \$1,000 a pair for mules; and that waggon took a dozen yoke; twenty thousand dollars without the whip and the yeller dog."

I suppose I showed surprise, for the Argonaut turned on me.

"Ask ex-Postmaster-General James if that ain't true. And ask him if the newspapers weren't printed on tissue paper to save overweight. They charged five dollars a letter in those days, and extra on love letters. It was big money times; there wasn't a nickel or a dime west of the Missouri."

And so on and so forth. The volcano was going, with frequent geyser-like explosions, from the Capitalist and the Lieutenant. We did not get to bed till long after midnight. My last recollection that night was of seeing the porter standing on the rear platform, slow-



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ly and regretfully dumping certain old soldiers into the darkness of the voiceless desert.

It is not surprising that the Argonaut was loquacious on our first night out from Kansas City, as we rattled through the scenes of his early days. We who had not been participators in the opening up of the West were not unmoved. The sight of a solitary cowboy, long-haired, slouch hatted, big spurred, sitting firmly in his ornate Mexican saddle, and loping along on the prairie, had led the ladies to indulge in a waving of handkerchiefs, and, I fear, a sly throwing of kisses that filled our hearts with wrath; and had not the train been going, we would have got out and sassed that cowboy, and somebody might have been hurt. He had actually the audacity to wave his gloved hand towards the Princess, who assured me that she considered him highly impertinent, though she did not clench her hand, which is the infallible sign of resenting an insult. We had passed Newton at dusk, now a quiet little

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town, but once a perfect hell on earth, where murder was the daily occupation of the population, and gambling and drinking and other vices their nightly diversion. When the much-needed vigilance committee got to work, it hanged eleven men in one night, and would have hanged more had the posts held out. We had halted a moment at Dodge City, and the Argonaut had had to drag forth a timid little guide-book-devouring tenderfoot from under his berth, and assure him that the cowboys no longer shot holes in white shirts and two-inch collars at that station. Strange as was everything to a tenderfoot, it was still difficult to believe that we were actually in the land sacred to boyhood as the scene of the most hairbreadth escapes on record, and of the ultimate triumph of true love over the schemes of the villain and his band of tawny cut-throats.

I have made no reference so far to the women on board, except in connection with the cowboy. They did not form a coterie quite as we men did, since the

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construction of even the Pullman car does not provide for such a club-room as we had in the smoker. Women must sit among the boxes, and must put up with petty annoyances of various kinds from the familiarity of a porter, or his insolence, to drinking tepid instead of iced water, just because we men need ice in the wash basin to keep our liquors cool. If women thoroughly understood the art of tipping, they would doubtless suffer less in travelling, but they do not. But of this hereafter. The Lieutenant's wife was there, he and she were the nabobs of the party, and occupied the state-room. There was the Princess, facile princeps, of course, but a little too dignified to be able to show off all her accomplishments before strangers, however agreeable, whom she would see the last of in four days. The Princess is very English, very modest and unassuming, and very proud. All the other women hung on her neck when she was leaving the train, and waved their handkerchiefs out of the window at her when she was gone, but of course I was

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with her, and besides she had always been ready to talk to the moping, help with a fretful child, and laugh with the cheerful, notwithstanding her own fatigue and two sturdy atoms of perpetual motion. Then there was a young wife going out with an invalid husband. Her's was a strange position. She had been so accustomed to having him pet her, think for her, save her in things small and great, that she never quite got over the impression that she was the invalid and he the attentive nurse; and he never tried to undeceive her. Many a time, in the night, when he should have been resting, I have seen him stealing down the aisle to get her a drink of water. Her's was the first berth made up at night, and the last in the morning. Let us hope she woke to the situation in due time, for he was going fast. Half the trouble in this world is brought about by not seeing things as they are. There are more people blind than selfish.

The proverbial old maid was there. We thought she had a romance, for she

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was in perfect health, and was always consulting the time-table. There was nothing she liked better than to get a man, preferably a married man, out on the back platform and monopolize him. She caught the Lieutenant that way once, and for an entire morning he named, described and gave the story of every place and scene. The next morning there was a marked coolness between his wife and the maiden lady, and a glare in his wife's eye every time she looked at him. All the virgin's blandishments were subsequently thrown away upon him, but she inveigled the Argonaut into what we had begun to term the chamber of horrors. Much to our surprise, he returned in five minutes, and upon our asking him how he managed to escape, replied, as he settled himself down for a comfortable smoke, that he had merely told her a story he had given us in the smoking-room the previous night.

Robert Louis Stevenson has some unkind words to say of the officials on the line over which he passed on an im-

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migrant train. Our experience on the Limited was, of course, better, probably as much better as the difference in expenses would certainly call for. But I cannot refrain from recounting a little experience which I had which showed the power of money. We had wired to Chicago for two lower berths, but had ultimately been compelled to take a section, which meant that a child would have to sleep at the risk of its neck somewhere contiguous to the roof. I had been assured that this could be rectified en route. On asking the conductor for a lower berth instead of the upper, and several lowers were empty, he instantly replied that he had not one to spare, that all were taken. Without urging him further, I slipped a bill into his hand, and he, on his part, not even turning away, or pretending to reconsider the question, instantly made the change I had desired. The act was as barefaced as that of the restaurant waiter who changes the label on a wine bottle in your presence, to suit your taste. I had a similar experience, with

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the same result, with the porter. I had tipped him once already, a large tip, as I thought, but on the third day out I found that its influence was just expiring. I couldn't get him to make up the children's berths at a reasonable hour; he grumbled because they had left biscuit crumbs on the seat, and began to hint that the regulations of the company prohibited the use of alcohol lamps, a fact, I believe, but winked at when the eyes are covered with green paper bearing a couple of signatures and the portrait of some United States dignitary. Five minutes afterwards he was "yes-sirring" me in the most cheerful manner possible, romping about the car vestibule with the children, and keeping an eye on the teapot.

I mentioned this peculiar psychical phenomenon to the Capitalist. "Sir," he said, "you did right. It's just got to be done, and allowance made in the estimates. Many a man has lost a fat contract—I mean just been worried to death by standing on his rights and reporting to the company. I tried it once



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with a porter. Not on this line. Demme, sir, he made my life miserable. A straight hold-up would have been more humane. Whenever I sat down to read, he would come along and dust the seat, and tell me between whites about the big tip he got from Vanderbilt last week, 'a pufekt gemmen, sah.' If I moved across the aisle he would gather up all the stray valises in the car and put them on my legs and into my ribs, explaining that they belonged to de gemman dat holds dat seat. And every time I stood up, he'd produce his whisk to brush my coat, and stand there, just stand. If I went to the smoker, he would steal the matches and take away the cuspidors to clean them, opening the car door and filling the place with train dust and alkali. When I wanted to go to bed, he'd say cheerfully: 'Bed, sah; yes, sah; make it up at de nex' station, sah,' and I'd have to roust him out of his own eventually. In the morning he'd pull back the curtains about daybreak, waken me up, and then apologize. 'Tought you got out at de



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las' station, sah, beg pardon, sah ; de car'v mighty crowded · some gemmen just got on lookin' foh a seat, sah. We's goin' trou' fine scenery, sah.' Why, if I hadn't tipped him at last, I might better have walked."

We had cast off our last dining car at Kansas City, and were thenceforth to depend upon the dining stations along the route. If we except the occasional irregularity of the meal hours, which sometimes compelled us to eat a second meal ere the first was well down, or combine two into one, I must say nothing that is not in praise of the catering. Twenty minutes does not seem a long time for a meal, and it is not, if one contemplates a state dinner ; but, from the time one sits down to the moment one gets up at one of these dining stations, there is nothing left but to eat. There seem to be three waiters to each guest, and the grass doesn't grow under their feet. The first course is on the table as you sit down; the next mysteriously slips under your nose as you take your last mouthful of the first, and so

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on, till you find yourself at peace with the world, and contentedly chewing a toothpick apparently hours before the train gives its preliminary warning. To the most nervous and most fastidious I can only repeat, you will have plenty of time, and you can scarcely dine better.

To invalids and those who have young children I would say, by all means take a lunch box. Our lunch box proved a thing of beauty and a joy forever. The Princess looked to that matter herself, and being blessed with a fine appetite and a good digestion, took pride in her labor. That box was our dearest friend on the journey. If time fell heavy upon our hands, we dived into that receptacle. If the children became troublesome, which even such paragons as ours sometimes did, we gave them the lunch box. If we did not feel like dining at the stations, we took care to feed the box from the lunch counter. It was like the widow's cruise, inexhaustible, and the pleasures of *Three Men in a Boat* were fustian compared with ours in that box. From home we brought

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tea, sugar, pepper, salt, knives, forks, spoons, cups and plates, everything else we readily got on the way, including dainty sections of cold roast chicken. We had an alcohol lamp, and made tea, which was a luxury for the women.

As to clothes, a man may wear his usual costume, if it isn't a golf or a bicycle suit. A man riding to California in a bicycle suit had best use his machine; otherwise he may furnish occupation for a border town coroner. A woman? Well, I approach this subject with diffidence, having a constant tendency to confuse their articles of attire in a manner that the Princess says is scandalous. Perhaps I had better say that the Maiden Lady already mentioned came on board in some kind of tight-fitting tailor-made dress, with starched collar, the envy of her sex, the lodestone of ours, but before the journey was over she was a spectacle for gods, not men. The starched collar was always getting limp and black, the dress buttons became gradually distributed along the desert, and her elbows and

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forearms wore through her sleeves. I concluded then, and now I know, that loose clothing is the sine qua non, something in the blouse line I suppose. I would suggest a pretty wrapper, such as I saw on our trip, only that the Princess says I was altogether too attentive to that wrapper.

It was this same maiden who brought a lot of ungainly valises into the car, and roused our ire. If she put them on her seat, they constantly prodded her ribs; if she put them on the floor, we fell over them, and glared at her. At night they lay on her feet and kept her awake, at which we were savagely delighted. The rest of us had valises that would slip under the berth at night and stand decently up in the corner next the window by day, miniature steamer trunks. These hints cost us something to learn, and are given without charge to those contemplating such a journey as ours.

One last piece of advice: Remember Mark Twain's sad experiences with Webster's Unabridged and Stevenson's

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troubles with Bancroft's History, and take no books yourself. You will be lucky if between the sights to be seen and the pleasant conversation of your companions you get time even to consult the guide-book you ought to buy on the cars. If I, who live chiefly by and on books, say this, be sure it is so.

In Kansas we were first made acquainted with the negro and the mule, a combination which supports half the comic papers of the Union; the man with a great flapping hat and the mule with two similar contrivances 'urnished by nature. Sometimes the negro would be asleep, and the mule's ears would fall forward over the animal's eyes and blind it, or get entangled with its feet and nearly send it sprawling, at which the negro would waken and tie the ears back again. There was a slight breeze blowing as we passed one such procession, and the mule had great trouble tacking against it until his master furl-ed his ears.

Now and again we had halted at some city of the plains, vigorous,

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and youthful, with broad avenues and frequent shade trees, and had then sped out over the rolling prairie, seeing but few of the millions of cattle and but little of the cultivated ranches which make Kansas the second state of the Union in agricultural importance. Some of the towns have a reputation to sustain, but the majority would prefer to lose theirs. They would even exchange it for the reputation of a Montreal alderman.

Be it remembered that it was towards the close of October that we passed through Kansas; the crops were garnered, the planted seed not yet quickened into life. Returning towards the close of April following, we found the scene vastly different. The bare ground was now covered with tender green shoots, the whole state carpeted with velvet. It is one of the most striking features of the journey to one accustomed to the well watered lands of Canada, to mark how, in the dry season, the naked earth lies a burned and heart-breaking desert between the Missouri and the Sierra, but



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ready to bloom, crop upon crop, the whole year round, under the favor of Jupiter Pluvius. Happy the land, however, that has watercourses! Was not Palestine such a country, "a land which the Lord thy God careth for." The United States west is a land of Egypt, "where thou sowedst thy seed and wateredst it with thy foot, like a garden of herbs," though the modern science of irrigation has done much to ease the curse. Diogenes says they do not water by the foot out West, but by the "inch."

A Western rancher to whom I quoted these Scriptural passages replied that he had been told that there was a speculator named Joseph who was able to squeeze the shorts by getting a corner in Egyptian wheat when the Palestine crop ran out. It is not safe to argue out West, or I would have suggested that the Egyptian crop was short that year also, and that Joseph had only cornered the supply.

From the moment we had left Chicago, we had been climbing steadily skyward, and when we passed Coolidge,

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the last station in Kansas, we were 3,365 feet above tide-water, Chicago being only 579 feet. We were to rise as high again, and higher, ere from the summit of the Continental Divide we could sweep down towards the Pacific. Hitherto, also, we had been speeding straight into the pathway of the setting sun, but at La Junta, shortly after entering Colorado, we turned southward, leaving behind us the famed health resorts and mining districts of the state, and seeing Pike's Peak dimly outlined northward in the azure distance.

We cut off the south-eastern corner of Colorado, a land of virtual desert, of dry water courses, arid plains dotted with sage brush, and enlivened at infrequent intervals only by the jack-rabbit, whose long ears obscured the vision. Our train chased one of these creatures, or rather we thought it did, until he settled down to work, and then we knew he had only been sauntering before. There' was just one brown streak, and we were alone again in the disconsolate desert.



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We were not long in Colorado without running into a mountain. The state is not half the size of the Province of Quebec, horizontally, but if it had not been crumpled up so, it would probably cover the whole of Canada. At least one gets this impression from glimpses of Pike's Peak and the two majestic Spanish Peaks that have been splitting the horizon for some time, to say nothing of yonder wall of rock through which we are about to pass, treading in the footsteps of the Argonauts and of the aborigines who, centuries before Columbus, traversed the Raton Pass, one of the few highways through the Rockies.





### CHAPTER III.

#### OVER THE DIVIDE.

Mountains have ever been the holy places of the earth. It was upon a mountain that Moses spoke with God, and from a mountain that he brought down the commandments to those who on the plains below were lost in superstition and worshipped the golden calf. The world's two historic cities, Jerusalem and Rome, were built upon mountains, and the story of nations has shown time and again that the love of liberty and honor and great movements have originated among those who were mountain bred.

The influence of the plains is depressing, their monotony stagnates the

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mind, or involves it in mystical theories. Witness the theologies of Egypt and the Populist movement in Kansas. The hills uplift to an approximation of their own grandeur; the vulture for the plains, the eagle for the crags. Such, at any rate, is the sentiment of the tourist accustomed to a varied landscape who has had a day and two nights upon the prairie, and sees before him for the first time, rise upon rise, the outliers of the Rocky Mountains.

We were now well on along the Santa Fe trail, every mile of which has had its tragedy, death by Apache bullet, death by hunger, death by thirst, death by torture, and, perhaps worst of all, death by heartbreak, when the stout heart that had braved the weary miles from the Missouri gave out and lay down to die before the heedless barrier that stood between him and the gold fields where he had hoped to win fortune. The Arkansas River, along whose banks we had for some time been running, is now forsaken, and we shall see but little water for the remainder of

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our journey, save an occasional mountain stream.

We were awakened for an early breakfast at La Junta, a little after six in the morning. La Junta, the Junction, the name is suggestive of black-eyed signoretas, with cigarettos and jealous lovers, and, unlike the bulk of United States names, it does not disappoint us. Here a padre gets in, who has been recuperating at Colorado Springs or looking at the mines at Denver. What strange tales he will tell his little Mexican mission flock! Will his reputation for veracity stand the strain? He has actually seen men working, working while they had money in their pockets. Incredible! And they did not celebrate a single saint's day. Monstrous! They smoke pipes. Caramba! And drink strong waters. Ah, now the padre speaks truth; that is to be a man.

Meanwhile our train has resumed its apparently interminable journey, and is hurling itself like a battering ram against the walls of rock that are drawing ever nearer. We have reached Trini-

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dad shortly before 11, "and now," says the Argonaut, "you ladies had better come upon the rear platform." The Virgin is there already; has she not her guide-book to direct her? We notice that the Argonaut avoids her, and attaches himself to the Princess. The Lieutenant's wife looks carefully after her personal property, but the Virgin is serene. She has her guide-book.

Like the breath of the salt sea was the first breath of the hills. Trinidad is at their foot, and here a second powerful engine was attached. Shades of early scoffers who thought no train could progress on smooth rails, what do ye think of this? We were going to be hoisted 1,640 feet into the sky within the next twenty miles, and would boldly go through a mountain that barred our further progress. Two engines to draw us, and yet he who would might have walked alongside the train, whose speed did not exceed four miles an hour. We wound round spurs, and rose upon trestle-work and curves yard by yard, the engines panting and the wheels ac-

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tually screaming on the rails as the train turned and twisted snakily in and out among the hills, revealing to our delighted eyes wondrous vistas, canons and ridges. At times we clung miraculously to the face of a cliff, stole on filmy bridges over ravines shaded with tremulous aspens, slipped by long, straight slopes, rugged with pines, and anon paused, as though, at last, the energy of man and the power of steam together despaired of surmounting the rise upon rise of interminable rock that overhung us. But man again proved his invincibility, and still we climbed the firemen feeding the insatiable fires, up, ever up, through the azure, such azure and dreamful sunlight as beggars description, until in the weirdest place of all, when the masses of rock seemed closing in upon us from all sides, we plunged into the Raton Tunnel with so mighty a re-echoing roar and rumble that all Inferno seemed about to welcome us to its Walpurgis dance.

“Uncle Dick,” it was the Argonaut who was speaking, and his words were

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addressed to the Princess. "Uncle Dick lived there," pointing to a ruined shanty on the right of the track as we had approached the tunnel. "And if ever man was glad to see his fellow-man it was us the night we pulled up here. He wasn't much on religion, but it seems to me that that man was another St. Christopher or some kind of Broad Church missionary just set down there by God himself to do something to help along a crowd of half-dead, gold-hunting, profane, blackguardly fellows like us, and put some heart into us and some faith in man after our fights with the redskin devils all along the line. Dick Wooten kept this pass in order for the forty-niners, and if every man that owed him anything for that was to subscribe two bits for a monument, it would scrape the stars out of the sky as the world turned round."

The Capitalist said: "I reckon he made a good thing out of the pass, if he charged toll."

The Virgin chirped blithely: "Oh, yes, he did; it says so in the guide-book."



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The Argonaut said again, and his tone checked the two like a cold water douche; "I reckon he made considerable out of it, if the angels know their business. He's dead, and I hope I'll be good enough to meet him again."

We had entered New Mexico an instant before plunging into the Raton Tunnel, and were then 7,662 feet above the sea. The tunnel is 2,011 feet long, replacing an old switch-back track that winds like a corkscrew over the mountain, and once through it our descent began, fast and faster, the brakes on, the engines reversed, and the smoke from the burning grease around the hot wheels offending our nostrils while we slid down the mountain slopes into a valley that was but the prelude to another scramble towards the stars.

A little more than a quarter of a mile nearer the earth's centre than Raton, we stopped at Las Vegas, an important town and health resort, and then we began mountaineering again. From the rear platform of the Pullman scene followed scene until, near evening, we had

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tealthily risen to an altitude of 7,452 ft. at Glorieta Pass. Glorieta means bower or summer house, but the name does not sound so sweetly in the ears of a consumptive. That place is his Rubicon, often his Waterloo. The high altitude at which the train travels for a day and a night is injurious to hemorrhagic patients, or those with heart complications, though it may be mentioned that the Santa Fe is about the safest trans-continental route in this respect. Sleep forsakes the pillow, and, as the hours go by, with cruel slowness, the shortening breath, twitching hands and distressing cough make the officials watchful. Then comes the hemorrhage, sometimes only a relief, but sometimes ushering in the last scene of all,—and the yellow flag or yellow lantern announces that another mortal has put on immortality. Several of us felt the oppression of the rarified air, and lost the night's sleep.

We passed Albuquerque after sunset, and took on two dandified personages from New York, with high collars, fashionable beavers and frock coats, who

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continually sucked the gold knobs of their walking sticks, as though too recently from the nursery to have forgotten the habits of babyhood. The Argonaut looked at them as they entered the smoking room, got up, said freezingly that he feared his smoking might annoy them, and went out upon the platform.

“Well,” he said, as I joined him there, “you wanted to know what changes have taken place out west since forty-nine. Go back to the smoking car, and look at them. They would have been planted at Kansas City in my time. They would have scared the stage mules half to death. Did you notice how I bolted?”

The Argonaut had not meant this reflection upon himself, and I was too wise to notice it.

New Mexico is almost the only portion of the United States which can rival Canada in ancient history, and, like portions of the Province of Quebec, is the only part of the country where ancient manners and customs and institutions persist side by side with modern

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Progress Separated by nearly three thousand miles, these two conservative regions afford many similarities. In Quebec, the cross is in evidence at intersecting roads, on hills, and in the villages ; it is so also in New Mexico. The Mexican oven is the habitant oven. Quebec suffered from seignorial tenure ; New Mexico suffered from the old Spanish land grant system. The Mexican chimney corner is a place where Jean Baptiste could sit and smoke and dream himself at home. Only Jean Baptiste would turn his nose up at the cigarette, and Juan Bautista would sneeze over the black pipe and kittikanik. Furthermore, neither will use his fists. The Canadian habitant will fight by the hour with his enemy, hurling words across the street, and getting his friends to hold him so that he may do his foe no bodily harm, while the Mexican will smile under an insult if he does not think it safe to resent it at once, and your friends will find you with a stiletto in your back a week later. Jean Baptiste will work ; Juan Bautista will

*A Canuck down South.*

not work. Jean Baptiste hides his hoard in a stocking; Juan Bautista hides his wealth in the ground against a rainy day, and that never comes in New Mexico. The Capitalist says that thousands of square miles of territory throughout the South are honey-combed with deposits of treasure, which the Mexican is too superstitious to endeavor to unearth, but which he thinks would yield a dividend on the stock of his projected Mexican Buried Treasure Company, to which he wanted me to subscribe.

The Mexican takes pride in his horse and saddle, and every Canadian knows that Jean Baptiste may be slow in many things, but that he must have a fast horse to speed on the ice in winter or down the country road after mass, his best girl by his side. Neither Mexican nor habitant cares much for modern improvements; the Mexican still ploughs with a sharpened stick. There is nothing in the Roman creed itself that should cause men to stagnate, but it is an undeniable fact that a large Roman

### *Over the Divide.*

Catholic community is generally behind one which is Protestant. Is it that men who bow their wills in all things to one man, be he priest or ruler under any other name, cannot hope to compete with men who have their wits sharpened by self-reliance? Is it that the unnumbered fete days and holidays enervate them for business, as men who dine by candle-light and sip liqueurs and wear gloves, go down before the brawny fist of noonday diners, ill, but for the inflow of farmers' sons from the country, great cities would deteriorate? Whatever be the reason, it is indisputable that a priest-ridden people must rest content with the kingdom of heaven, for they will get but little of the good things of earth.

And yet they get happiness. There is no denying the fact. The Mexican is born, marries and dies in constant sunlight; he has no newspaper, no advertising, no business apparently; no booms, no speculative fever (unless gambling means the same); has probably never heard of the President, and would



*A Canuck down South.*

show no interest in an election that sets every so-called clever man in the States frenzied with excitement. He never make himself a clothes-horse for election badges before the day, nor trundles his neighbor round town in a barrow, or shaves the one side of his face the day after ; yet he is far more contented than they.

We were now truly in a foreign land. The United States owns it, but the once masterly Spaniard has left the impress of his mailed hand upon it. And a still more ancient civilization piques the curiosity of the antiquary in the pueblos, grouped on the top of some almost inaccessible rock or mesa, and reached by sheer climbing of ladders or niches in the rock. What terrible invasion in prehistoric times drove this ancient people to such defensive measures ? Vandals and Huns have roamed on every continent, and the Israelitish wanderings and conquest of the indweller have been exemplified even on these Western plains at the very dawn of the human era.



### *Over the Divide.*

We passed in the night, but saw on our return one such Pueblo, Laguna, perched upon a barren hill some sixty odd miles from Albuquerque, apparently one house of adobe mud, flat-roofed and capable of accommodating fully a thousand people. In older days entry was effected by climbing ladders to the roof, and descending through the scuttle, after drawing the ladder up. The Capitalist says that a latch key must have been a very cumbrous article in those times, and that to have seen a party of hilarious Pueblos staggering home in the wee sma' 'ours, and trying to extract their ladders from their vest pockets and lean them up against the right house must have been a curious sight. There is a legend not set down in the guide-books, that the Pueblo women used to sit upon the house-tops while their better halves were at the lodge, and would not let the ladder down to them unless they could pronounce Cua-uhquichollan, Tequehmecaniani and Tlaca-huepancuxotzin, which, one would judge, was a more severe ordeal than chrysanthemum.

### *A Canuck down South.*

The Mexican houses are flat-roofed, one-storied affairs, not unlike large match-boxes, made of mud, which the everlasting sunlight bakes a light yellow. This material is called adobe in the guide-books, and doby by Westerners, and in that rainless climate is practically indestructible. The old Pecos church, visible in the valley shortly after passing Glorieta, is some 350 years old, and its doby walls are as good as new. On the top of the haunted mesa, the observer imagines that he can still see the remains of the Acoma which was before the present Acoma, and the present Acoma claims to have had a few years the start of the Tower of Babel. The legend of the first town is a sad one, with which the guide-books make us familiar. It appears that a large landslide or a cloudburst, or something of the kind, took place while the men were working on their farms in the plains below, and their means of getting back to town was destroyed. Some say all the women, some say only three, were in the town when the catastrophe

### *Over the Divide.*

took place ; but, however the number varies, the legends all agree that the men on the plains had the agonized fate of looking vainly up the face of seven hundred feet of cliff, to where frantic women slowly starved to death. And from that day, somewhere back in the ages, to this, the foot of man has never walked in these deserted chambers or human eye looked over the wall where the dreadful tragedy was enacted. It is a strange thing to think of, a Pompeii in the sky, awaiting the coming of some nineteenth century investigator, who shall find, perhaps the children's toys untouched upon the floors, the women's domestic implements, the evidences on the long-deserted hearth of the meal that was joyfully being prepared for loved ones, and perhaps even the bodies of the dead, for in that atmosphere even flesh dries, and scarcely will decay. Superstition has surrounded that lone rock on the Mexican plains, and he who would solve the mystery will require armed men at his back. Will it be worth the while, or will the

### *A Canuck down South.*

result of any investigation be but another useless desecration that shall cause us once more to bless the natural law which decrees that even our bones should vanish ere the time arrives when we are strangers to the earth where once we were familiar, and serve to gratify the curiosity of some human mole.

From Glorieta to Albuquerque the air-brakes were scarcely ever off. We were virtually tobogganing down mountain slopes, and within less than a hundred miles had subsided to an elevation 2,500 feet lower than at Glorieta. We crossed the Rio Grande in the gloom of night, which rendered that stream more romantically picturesque than was the Missouri under the sunlight, which had revealed the mud-flats diversified by a creek, the enormous bridge over which looked like a piece of sarcasm. But the greater ease in breathing which the lower level gave us was not destined to last long, for from Albuquerque we were again toiling up grade towards the Continental Divide, that mystic point whence a glass of wa-

### *Over the Divide.*

ter spilled east or west might seek the sea of peace or that of storms, the grand old ocean that for centuries has crowned British brows with triumph, or the vast new waters destined to roar through coral reefs or whisper on golden sands the story of a dawning age.

Crossing the Divide! The term in olden times was synonymous with death. It was used in this sense by the Argonauts, possibly because their heaven was on the other or eastern side, probably because they could think of no fate more dreadful than returning from their vast horizons and high, bracing, soul-stirring latitudes to a life on a lower level among starched shirts and the fetters of custom and fashion forged about mankind by a dead and gone generation, a place where men are measured by their stone frontages and their great grandfathers, and no longer by their own human inches and mental image of their Creator. It was about three in the morning when we passed this "line," and most of us, notwithstanding our interest, were sleeping, though restlessly.

*A Canuck down South.*

It may have been the effect of the altitude, or it may have been something else, but I know I dreamt a wonderful dream. The romance of the Maiden Lady came home at last. It was broad daylight, and we men were, as usual, sitting in the smoker spinning yarns. The dandies who had got on at Albuquerque were with us, each sitting on his hands and enjoying the conversation. Suddenly the train jarred, and slowly came to a stop. The Argonaut leaned forward, a strange fixed look on his face that was not agreeable, and his hand stole round towards his back, while he looked penetratingly into all our faces in rapid succession.

“What is that?” said one of the tenderfeet. “Is it a hold-up?”

I don't know why, but we all followed the look of the Argonaut, which was fixed on the New York dudes, and each of these harmless creatures now held a revolver in each hand, and each revolver looked like a cannon.

Then one of the dudes said suavely: “It is a hold-up. I am sorry to interrupt the tory, but can assure you, gentlemen, that

*Over the Divide.*

If you will only keep your hands above your heads for a little while, we will do you no harm. There's fifty thousand in the express to-day, and our pals want it. We don't intend you any harm if you nave horse sense."

There were shots towards the front of the train, then screams, screams of a man, not reassuring if you have ever heard them; yet the dudes sat immovable with their howitzers, that now looked like hundred ton guns, pointing everywhere at once, as it seemed. I was there but I must have had a nightmare, for I couldn't raise my hands, and my pistol in my hip-pocket seemed to be about a thousand miles away.

Then came the denouement. The Maiden Lady entered, clad?—well, they say dreams are made, as a mosaic, out of waking experiences; but if I ever saw a woman so dressed I want to know it. She wore pajamas and carried a parasol and said tragically :

"This is a hold-up."

The mouths of the revolvers had meanwhile expanded to about the size of the



*A Canuck down South.*

Raton Tunnel; yet on the left side of one I saw the robber wince. The Maiden Lady looked at him, and then there was a shriek. I said to myself :

‘ Now, we’ll get a first-class corpse.’

Instead of which she threw herself upon the immaculate shirt front.”

“ Found, found !” she cried; “ my long lost brother.”

And then, as I woke, I still heard the long lost brother say “ damn.”

But the last part wasn’t a dream. I heard the word over and over again, as a night-shirted young husband who had got on—well, I will not say where—paraded the car with his squalling child. He did not stay in one place, but with generous instincts distributed that squall all over the car. Now he would hold the baby to the keyhole of the Lieutenant’s state-room, and when he heard the Lieutenant’s remark, would bolt impetuously to the other end of the car, distributing a war-whoop at every berth. By and bye our youngest woke, stretched himself, put his toe in my mouth, and said :

“ Pa, is that a new baby?”

## *Over the Divide.*

I said I didn't know.

"Well, pa, if that's a new baby, don't you think the angels put him out of heaven because he cries so?"

Again I didn't know.

"Pa, don't you think it needs oiling?"

I said I didn't think it could do much better than it was doing.

Morning dawned at last after an uncomfortable night, ushering in our fifth day on the cars. I do not know how others feel about it, but we felt after the first day as if a change to a coffin would be a welcome relief, and give us more room. On the second day we were willing to stand another twenty-four hours; on the third day, we didn't care how long the journey lasted, and on the fifth we thought of its termination with regret. There is no doubt that eels do get used to skinning.

We had fallen so thoroughly into one another's ways, made such delightful friendships, and had, on the whole, so much comfort on the long journey, that we would indeed have been very hard to please had we not begun to regret the

*A Canuck down South.*

now fast approaching hour of separation. The warmth of a trans-Atlantic acquaintance is but cold and distant compared with that which is engendered by such a trip as ours. Compared with a Pullman car, a steamer is a wilderness. On board ship we can get away into nooks and corners ; in a Pullman, even a flirtation must be carried on under the eyes of old campaigners, and no one can get out of reach of his neighbor's ears and eyes. We ate together, talked together, almost dressed together, and slept so closely packed that one felt that his neighbor read his very dreams. A filmy curtain was our house front, and across the street our fellow-citizen fared no better. In our long journey from Chicago we had all become accustomed to much that would have appeared odd in a drawing-room, which reminds me of a ludicrous incident, which was, however, anything but funny to the chief actors.

Some time during the night, at some way-station, a man and his wife got on, and we were immediately prejudiced against them, because the man had wak-

### *Over the Divide.*

ened us with his storming at the conductor for not having a lower berth to give them, as though the Company should have kept a berth empty for their convenience all the way from Chicago. In the morning, while we were in the midst of our dressing in our usual free and easy style, the Argonaut, sweeping under his berth for his collar-button, and the Capitalist making down the aisle towards the wash-room, with the bulk of his clothing over his arm, a flash of a neat ankle or bare arm, fringed somewhere around the shoulder with dainty lace showing from behind the berth curtains the kind of struggle the ladies were having to dress ; when, I say, we were thus engaged, this new comer, whom we regarded as an interloper among our party, returned from the wash-room, where he had dressed himself. He took the situation in at a glance. His wife, who had been sitting in her seat, completing her toilet, was, in his opinion, in imminent danger, and he pounced upon the mildest-mannered and most modest of our party, an English Church clergyman,

*A Canuck down South.*

who stood without coat or vest, giving the finishing touches to the halyards that upheld his lower rigging, his standing rigging, as it were.

“Sir,” screamed the irate and shocked husband ; “what do you mean by such conduct. How dare you, sir, unblushingly, dress in my wife’s presence?”

If a thunderbolt had fallen amongst us it would not have created more consternation. The Argonaut stopped peering under the berth ; the Capitalist quickened his pace and disappeared into the smoking-room, while there was a sudden stoppage of the rustling behind the curtains, as though the ladies had imagined it was to them that loud-voiced Comstock addressed himself.

Our shy clergyman had no idea that he was being spoken to in that manner, and proceeded quietly to put on his vest, when a renewed roar in his ear lifted him from the car floor, and when he landed again he turned round and asked in some confusion, “Are you speaking to me?”

“To you, sir, yes, sir ; it’s perfectly

*Over the Divide.*

scandalous, sir ! Porter, do you not see that creature putting on his vest, his vest, sir, before my wife's eyes."

But the porter was out on the back platform, admiring the scenery by that time.

The poor clergyman so suddenly assaulted, lost his presence of mind for the moment, or I'm sure he would not have replied as he did. It was a good retort, but too good to be intended. He said :

"I beg your pardon ; I—I, I really didn't think she would object. I'm sure I didn't when I saw her putting on her—"

"Sir, don't talk to me ; don't dare, sir. You ought to be ashamed of your cloth," the long coat being very much in evidence on the car seat, and the clerical vest having been buttoned all awry in great haste.

Then the clergyman recovered his senses. He had not dealt with sinners for nothing, and this boor was very much in his line.

"My dear sir," he said, frigidly ; "if you cannot be gentlemanly, you should at least be consistent. I do not consider

*A Canuck down South.*

that a man without his vest is so disreputable an object as to call forth such remarks, and, at any rate, it is preposterous that you should cry out upon me at one moment to be ashamed of my cloth, when you have just told me I should be ashamed of the want of it."

Then followed language that I dare not set down, and it was not the clergyman who used it, either. But, fortunately, it did not last long. With one bound the Argonaut laid his still powerful arm on that of the boor (we weren't shocked at the lack of the collar-button just then), and he said :

"You miserable hound, if you don't recognise that there are ladies on this car, and stop that profanity, I'll throw you from the car window. You never were on a Pullman before, nor mixed with decent people." And the way that man subsided and took his meek wife off the car at the next station is one of the pleasant memories of my life, though I, and all of us, were deeply sorry for his wife.

When the morning sun gilded the peaks about us we were in Arizona. If New



### *Over the Divide.*

Mexico affords us a glimpse of prehistoric civilization and peoples, surely Arizona reveals to us the secrets of the creation of the world. Here we seem to be in Nature's boiler-room, and her stupendous energy, which in other parts of the world is concealed under vales smiling with flowers and flowing rivers, is here demonstrated in rivers of congealed lava and ashes and cinders, heaped up mountain high. Among yonder peaks lies cold and still the crater of many a volcano which once perhaps rivalled Krakatoa, Etna and Vesuvius. In the dawning ages, when the continent bore a different shape, and strange monsters lurked in the sea and stranger trod the earth, what a dreadful scene must Arizona have presented, the solid world trembling with pent-up vapors, the lava winding luridly down the vast mountain slopes, the air thick with steam and cinders and sick with the continuous thunder of mighty explosions! For miles upon miles, upon all sides, as the train swept on, we saw nothing but the relics of subterranean fires. And then, as the hours slipped by, and once more

### *A Canuck down South.*

we were on the flanks of the mountains, my heart went out to Arizona. We seemed once more in Canada. Here were whispering pines, long woodland aisles where the sunlight steeped verdant knoll and rocky crag with color and with warmth. Here were flowers, water-courses and life, and the axe of the lumberman rang keen as in our woods at home. Yes, I love Arizona. Even in its deserts it has a charm such as endears Sahara to the Arab, and its bare hills have the strange, weird attraction such as Rob Wanlock sings of in his Scottish lilt. Arizona, like a capricious beauty, wins and holds us, in spite of will or reason. Whether it be the unique Devil's Canon, which the train leaps over, clinging to a filmy bridge 225 feet above the tiny stream beneath, or the incomparable Grand Canon of the Colorado, which is over 6,000 feet deep, or the 13,000 feet of the San Francisco mountain, half of which, even at the elevation we have reached, still towers above us; whether it be the chalcedony park, or the cave dwellings, or only the natural mountain parks,

### *Over the Divide.*

the ruddy desert and cinder cones and the valuable copper mines of the country, Arizona is a fitting gateway to California, the land of sunshine and treasure.

I shall not soon forget Canon Diabolo. The Capitalist and I were standing on the rear platform, when suddenly the level prairie sank away swiftly from us to a depth that made us dizzy to look down, as though the subterranean powers had cleft the earth to claim their own. We had just time to gasp when the earth rose again to meet us, and the train was once more gliding along the level. There had not been the slightest warning of what was coming. At night a man would walk clear off the prairie, and apparently put his lifted foot down in the streets of Hong Kong. The Capitalist mopped his brow.

"I always forget that canon," he said; "and my heart jumps into my mouth when we leave the ground so unexpectedly. I'm not as good now as the first time I was bald-headed, and that gulf scares me. What chances they lose out West! If I had that canon in New York

*A Canuck down South.*

State, now, I could make a fortune out of it. Just picture it, a big hotel on each side, incline railway to the bottom, roller skating rink, rope-walkers going across, peanuts, banana stands, merry-go-rounds for the children, and so on. Sir, there'd be a fortune in that canon; and I'd advertise it till there wouldn't be a man would dare come to America and not see it."

We supped in California that Wednesday evening, at the Needles, and mirthful was our last night on the train. What a wonderful creature is man! While we, in the luxury of a Pullman car sat smoking and spinning yarns over our ice-cold liquors, we were boring through the gloom of night over the great American Desert, where many an unfortunate forty-niner left his bones to bleach under the pitiless sun of a parched sea of sand and giant cactus. Here there was a sign of life only at the little stations set down along the line of steel,—one called Bagdad, a name which fitted it, another called Siberia. Whose grim irony named this hottest spot in the world after that region of ice? I

### *Over the Divide.*

stood a short time on the platform that night, watching the placid stars and the dim stretches of mesa, broken by cactus shadows, and wondering at the energy of those who in a prairie schooner traversed the Western wilds, wound through the mountain passes, and crossed these two hundred miles of deadly alkali plains in pursuit of gold. Starvation Peak, Los Animas, the river of lost souls, Death alley, and hundreds of places, named and unnamed, witnessed the stern fight waged between barbarism and civilization and between man and nature, ere the Stars and Stripes waved in Pacific breezes.

The journey across the continent, is it not an allegory of the journey of life? Such thought, as the car wheels clanked rythmatically on the rails, shaped itself in my mind as follows :

#### LIFE'S ARGONAUTS.

*Over the Red Missouri,  
Out on the open plain,  
Far from the haunts of childhood,  
They ne'er shall see again,*

*A Canuck down South.*

*Seeking the golden treasure,  
Braving the toil and strife,  
Eagerly go the Argonauts  
On the journey of life.*

Vast and void and voiceless  
To the horizon's rim,  
Stretches the rolling prairie,  
As day by day grows dim.  
Beneath the wondrous star glow  
That lights the heavens calm,  
Come bivouac, rest and slumber  
And dreams of the lone first palm.

Nor tree, nor grass, nor blossom,  
Anywhere under the eye,  
Sage brush, sand and cactus  
And glistening alkali;  
Promise of water often,  
But only a mirage sham,  
Till lips can hardly utter  
A sigh for the lone first palm.

The prairie dog has his burrow.  
The prairie hen her nest;  
Only we, under heaven,  
Have neither home nor rest.

## *Over the Divide.*

Over the shimmering level,  
Long as the hot sun swam,  
We plodded wearily forward,  
Seeking the lone first palm.

Beyond the rolling prairie.  
Beyond the desert drear.  
At last, the rugged mountains  
Their mighty flanks uprear.  
Parched and starved and weary,  
We face their pitiless calm—  
Oh, that the journey were over,  
Oh, for the lone first palm !

Indian braves in their ambush,  
Hark! how the bullets sing!  
While, through unfathomed canons,  
Shrilly the war whoops ring!  
Lying, face up to the heavens,  
Silent are Dick and Sam,  
God in His mercy bring the rest  
Safe to the lone first palm!

Miles upon miles of desert  
Under a burning sun,  
Till the blood is boiling in our veins,  
And life is almost done ;  
Then rise upon rise of mountains,  
And hope's eternal balm.  
In the vales beyond is the goal we seek.  
Hurrah! for the lone first palm.



*A Canuck down South.*

Precipice, cliff and canon,  
Torrent and icy peak,  
Tempest, and whirling snow drifts  
Hiding the trail we seek.  
Then sunshine, warmth and pleasure,  
And rest without pain or qualm  
In a riotous garden of flowers  
Beneath the lone first palm.

*Prairie and peak and desert,  
Hope, and the death of hope,  
Joys and alluring visions,  
Trials and the strength to cope ;  
Success to him who struggles,  
Defeat to him who faints,  
So strives each soul to reach its goal,  
The Haven of the saints.*

Next morning palm trees and graceful peppers, eucalyptus, poplar and other familiar and unfamiliar trees, greeted our eyes. The desert had given place to a garden, and through orange and lemon groves, vineyards, apricot, prune and fig orchards, and a riot of roses and other flowers, we reached our destination.



## CHAPTER IV.

### IN ARCADIA.

When we reached Sierra Madre, after so long a railway journey that the timetable had come to be regarded as a piece of sarcasm, Diogenes met us at the station. Diogenes is a Canadian, and that is not his name, but as he sets up to be a philosopher and came to meet us with a lantern that glorious sunny morning—a tribute to my honesty—he was so dubbed instanter, and the name has stuck to him. A short drive through avenues shaded with pepper-trees, eucalypti, palms and live oaks, brought us to the cottage that was to be our California home, a sweet little place sun-smitten all day long, its verandah gloomed with morning-glories and climb-

### *A Canuck down South.*

ing roses and its carriage drive lined with broad-leaved palmettos drawn up soldierly on either side, as though to keep in check the mob of orange and lemon trees that crowded the ranch. Here in the golden afternoon was gathered a party of reunited Canadians, and while the children romped in the garden, pelting one another with roses and carnations or playing hide-and-seek behind banks of chrysanthemums, Diogenes and I talked of the long ago, and offered such incense of tobacco (brought from Canada) to the Manitou as would have made Barrie write a second volume in honor of 'My Lady Nicotine,' and have shamed the tribute of the Algonquins who guided Champlain beyond the Chaudiere Falls.

After that October day we hunted health and killed time in Arcadia. Phyllis was not there, nor Strephon, except under less euphonious names and in more unromantic guise, nor did we ever spy a woodland nymph or hear the hoof of

### *In Arcadia.*

a satyr among the live oaks' gospelling glooms. Otherwise, it was Arcadia. The sun sauntered lazily through the sky, day after day, and let the seasons take care of themselves. The century-plant thought itself very energetic because it had bloomed once since the Declaration of Independence, while the flowers forgot time altogether, and blossomed the whole year round. There a thousand years were as a day, and a day as a thousand years. The inhabitants seldom knew the month and hardly ever the date. Calendars are handy when promissory notes have to be renewed. Diogenes had one, and so had I, but we were never able to induce any banker to allow us to put them to their proper use, and the only interest we had in keeping track of the date was connected with our remittances. No one could keep track of the days of the week in this Arcadia, and Diogenes, who has a deep reverence for the fourth commandment, made it a rule not to work at all,

### *A Canuck down South.*

lest he should inadvertently break the Sabbath.

Physicians the world over send consumptives to southern California, but they never seem to get there. At least, there are none in Sierra Madre, although a good deal is heard about lung trouble. No invalid dies there ; he does not even slip awa, like Drumtochty folk. His friends only say that he is gone, and shake their heads, fearing that, having gone farther, he may be faring worse. In the various sanitoriums time is pleasantly spent swapping symptoms, and the man who has most is looked upon with exceeding respect. Diogenes and I secured a fairly good reputation in this direction by the liberal use of a medical dictionary. It is truly wonderful how many symptoms can be got from an unabridged medical dictionary, assisted by a vivid imagination. There was, however, one man in the place before whom we sank into irritating insignificance. He had more diseases than a

*In Arcadia.*

civic hospital, and had a way of diagnosing some fatal and insidious malady from what his companions had mistaken for signs of robust health. If he slept well, paresis was coming on; if he slept ill, his days were numbered; if he had a good appetite, there was a secret waste; if he ate but little, he was in the last stages of something awful. Diogenes and I could not boast of a single symptom in his presence without being swamped with a list of his maladies. He was dying more variously than any person we knew—and he is not dead yet. The mystery was subsequently solved when we found that he religiously read through all the patent medicine advertisements of the Los Angeles 'Times,' and we got to hating him so for his symptoms that we used to wish he would take some of the remedies prescribed, and die a natural death—that is, a natural death for such an idiot.

Sierra Madre is an extensive hamlet on the slope of the Sierra Madre moun-

### *A Canuck down South.*

tains, overlooking the fertile valley of San Gabriel and about six miles from Pasadena and sixteen from Los Angeles, on the Kite-shaped Track, its station being Santa Anita. It is devoted to the cultivation of oranges, lemons, apricots, figs, grapes and the tuberculous bacillus. As a health resort it is fast coming to the front, and seems to merit its reputation. Its little cemetery does its best to prosper with the rest, but is not a success. It is a pathetic little God's Acre under the kindly shadow of the eternal hills. There are a few well-kept graves and several costly headstones, but these are the exception. Tomato cans usually do service as mortuary urns and flower pots, but as the weeds conceal them and the flowers as well, they are quite as good as Carrara. The whole place is usually a blaze of wild sunflowers, and honeycombed with gopher holes, while often the jack rabbit or the cotton-tail sits, lost in reflection beneath its stupendous ears amid the



*In Arcadia.*

lonely graves . The epitaphs, when deciphered, are not cheerful. The young may die, but the old must, says Longfellow, and in any properly regulated cemetery youth finds comfort in reading that so-and-so died at eighty or ninety, and in finding that he stands a good chance under the system of averages of being able to revisit that cemetery many times yet before he forgets to return to the bustling world. But our cemetery deals not easily with this simple faith of the young. Here lie, in the majority, those of our own age, stricken down before their prime, their ideals unsullied, their hopes unrealized. Here lie some whose history we learn, lonely strangers whom a broad human sympathy has laid in the bosom of the eternal mother, far from home and friends, some whose deserted and neglected graves bear mute testimony to the haste with which the nursing relative packed his or her trunk with one hand and closed the dead eyes with the other, grief long since discount-

### *A Canuck down South.*

ed in the early stages of the wearying malady and thoughts of home and relief and rest making welcome the close of the tragedy.

When I was in Southern California I wrote an article in which I stated that the country could not progress any faster without pulling the earth out of its orbit, and that a man going hunting over waste lands in the morning, was apt to lose his way on his return home at night among the orchards that had been planted on the same ground during the day. A California paper printed the article, but on second thought, and at this distance, I would qualify the statement, by admitting that the bustle of trade in and around Sierra Madre was not sufficiently loud to prevent my sleeping at night. Not that Sierra Madre was unenterprising. The place had a 'bus driver, insurance agent, press correspondent, private banker, real estate broker, news agent, and so on. The only trouble was that when this man went to town, busi-

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ness languished until his return. He was also agent for a firm of undertakers, and was in consequence interested in the progress of every invalid. He displayed great anxiety about my health from the first, and although we are fast friends, I feel that I disappointed him by the rapidity of my recuperation.

Touting for trade, while the subject is still alive, is not uncommon among Southern California undertakers. One day a man came up our avenue while I was on the verandah.

'How do you do?' he said, bowing. Every one bows to us in the country parts of California, whether they know us or not, just as they do in French Canadian districts. It saves trouble if one leaves his hat at home.

I gave him good day and he came up the steps, expatiating upon the view of the valley and mountains. Californians have the idea that the rest of the earth is flat, stale and unprofitable, and it does not do to try to undeceive them,

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unless one is the bigger man. After he had heard my opinion, he said.

‘Out here for your health, I suppose.’

‘Yes,’ I replied, ‘ordered to a warm place, to escape a warmer.’

He laughed so heartily that I at once knew he was an agent of some kind. Agents can always see the point of a joke. But he quickly grew serious once more, and said,

‘You’re cautious, you’re shrewd, you’re the kind of man I like to meet. Now I’m sure you would like to have some positive assurance as to your future comfort. I can give you that, at least, so far as your mortal remains are concerned. I represent Messrs. Coffin & Graves, of Pasadena. Give me the date of your birth, and I’ll get the other details from your wife later. She can telephone when you die, and we’ll have you in cold storage within forty minutes. And say,’ here he leaned confidentially towards me—‘If your wife gets her message in ahead of our regular agent here, we’ll

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allow her the usual commission, of course.'

I told the man I would be deeply grieved to give my custom to any one else ; to arrange for a first-class funeral, and to come back, in which event I would cheerfully supply the corpse. He did not seem at all pleased when he went away, and he never came back. Perhaps I looked too healthy.

When the two or three livery horses of which Sierra Madre could boast were engaged by luckier people, we walked, but that was seldom. The grades are too steep. There is not a level hundred yards within the town limits, and in many places one could step from one's attic into a neighbor's parlor. It was the easiest thing in the world to drop a hint into a neighbor's ear, if one started it right, and as for scandal, it never stopped between the highest house in the Sierra and the lowest in the valley. But it climbed up just as easy, too. Everybody helped it along, they were so soci-

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able in Sierra Madre, and so kindly. Not being so active as scandal, we drove, and the drives were delightful. There was the Baldwin ranch to visit, where a fine racing stable is kept, there was pretty Monrovia—whose lights glittered picturesquely through the night, there was the San Gabriel Mission, with its quaint Mexican village, and last, but by no means least, there was Pasadena, the Crown of the Valley, home of millionaires and one of the show towns of the state. If one cared for horseback riding, it was to be had, and what could be more delightful than a canter through shady avenues in early morning, while the birds were straining their harmonious throats to greet the sun, and the mists were bathing the towering hills or billowing in iridescent masses in the valley beneath, for Sierra Madre, like Mohammed's coffin, hangs between heaven and earth, between snowy peak and far-stretching plain.

We celebrated New Year's day in an

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unique manner. There are and have been many carnivals in various parts of the world, but to Pasadena alone belongs the honor of holding a midsummer carnival in midwinter, a tournament of roses on New Year's Day, and we, with thoughts of Canadian carnivals, sparkling with ice and snow, still treasured in our hearts went to see the Pasadena pageant.

The drive of six miles to the town was entrancing. The birds twittered and rose and settled in our path, the gophers scurried out of the way and an infrequent hare sat up palpitating behind the sage brush, petrified by the thunder of innumerable hoofs all trending towards the one point.

The little town of ten thousand people was a fairy-land that day. Its broad avenues, shaded with palms, eucalypti and peppers, overflowed with a riotous torrent of flowers, in whose odorous and tinted billows the vehicles they adorned seemed swept along as though overwhelmed by a mountainous wall of



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waters. The horses waded breast, and even shoulder high in roses, the carriage wheels were clogged with calla lilies. Mermaids, beautiful as a dream, rose, wreathed with smilax, and blossoms, from the sea of flowers, their lissome forms gleaming through the billows of greenery crested with rainbow-tinted foam. Mermen not inharmoniously blew horns dripping the universal sea. Here floated along some vast ark, ponderously magnificent, splashed to the eaves with living color, there all Japan spoke from mystic chrysanthemums. Six-in-hands, tally-hos, four-in-hands, spans, tandems and single vehicles abounded, and all were a bank of flowers, There were bicycles also, some a mass of moving blossoms; and it is impossible to estimate the quantity of flowers that on that day were used to grace the tournament. We had never seen anything like it, and never expect to again.

Our Arcadia was not without the charms of sport. In the immediate vi-

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cinity and within sound of the dinner bell we had quail among the copses, jack rabbits in the vineyards and washes, squirrels in the live oaks, gophers in the wheat fields, wild pigeons, blue jays, domestic cats that made night hideous, an occasional coyote skulking round the chicken corrals and the infrequent tramp disposed to take charge of our valuables. Among the mountains, the wild cat crouched along the branch, the mountain lion stole through the underbrush, the sheep clambered upon almost inaccessible crags and the grizzly lumbered along, covering the miles with an easy rapidity that was astonishing in one of his build. I did not hunt for him, having gone to California for my health, and I was careful where I went to sleep. A man from Ventura, who went to sleep in the Sierra, woke to find that a grizzly bear had actually stepped across his body. He has always boasted what he would have done had he awakened at that interesting moment, but we noticed

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that he could now never sleep within sight of a mountain.

I would have added blackbirds and turkey buzzards to my list, only that these are sacred birds in California. The blackbirds throng the busy streets of the towns as numerous and as impertinent as the sparrows in Canada. I do not suppose there would have been any objection to my hunting them, on account of my peculiar style of shooting. All the game in the neighborhood soon got to know me as a mild mannered gentleman of pacific intentions. Even the Jack rabbits entered into the true spirit of the sport, and one in particular would often sit on his haunches among the orange trees and hoist his ears for a target. When a bullet passed near enough to suggest that I might be growing dangerous, he would shift his ground a few yards and I would have to try for the range again by sighting a few shots on the barns or distant mountains. The 'enfant terrible,' with fine sarcasm, always

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characterized my rifle practice as 'banging the mountains.'

Not the least pleasing of our occupations, and one which, strange to say, never tired Diogenes or myself, consisted in lying beneath a spreading live oak on some ranch and watching the orange gatherers at work, swart Mexicans and yellow Chinese, under huge sombreros or washbowl hats of straw, who, pouch on shoulder and ugly knife in hand, reaped the juicy harvest that clustered so thickly upon the trees that there seemed no shadow under the boughs but only a blaze of sunshine. At hand huge waggons were drawn up with their teams of patient mules, or went lumbering down the slopes, laden with full boxes, to the cry of the driver and the incessant crackling of his long whip.

When all else failed we derived considerable entertainment from the climate. California has more weather in a day than Canada has in a year, and Old Probs always explains a failure in his

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predictions by the statement that his forecasts got mixed in the mails. It is to be understood that California extends through about ten degrees of latitude to begin with, then it extends up and down about three miles, and altitude gives as great a variety as latitude. Further, the state is washed by the Pacific on the west and dried by the American desert on the east. A man can select his own climate, and where we were he has a variety of choice almost every day within walking reach. This is very embarrassing to a stranger. He gets up in the morning and perhaps happens to look into the valley which is overcast and full of fog, so he reaches for his waterproof and umbrella. By the time he has thus equipped himself, he looks at the mountains, and when he sees them covered with new fallen snow he rubs his eyes and decides to wear an ulster and fur cap. When he gets to the front door in this guise, he sees the calla lilies and the orange and lemon trees round about

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blooming in warm sunshine, and goes back to put on a linen duster and sombrero, and by-and-by he comes home with a cold in his head, having accidentally wandered into a climate that takes not kindly to linen dusters. In time he learns to wear heavy woollen underwear all the year round.

If a man stays at home he can enjoy the same climate for six months at a time, and the next six months is the twin brother of the first. When a San Franciscan sees the sun he thinks he has discovered a comet, and the Los Angelenian will write a column editorial and half a dozen sonnets on a shower of rain one could carry in a bucket. And the biggest newspaper in the southern counties will publish his efforts. But I am not surprised at this. After one has lived some months in southern California, a vague dissatisfaction permeates his soul, and it finally dawns upon him that a continuity of fine days is monotonous. When, day after day, week

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in and week out, the sun shines, the flowers bloom and the birds sing, the stranger finds himself praying for rain. Then he prays for snow, and as the Land of Sunshine continues to verify its name, he gradually increases his demands until he is importuning heaven for hail, wind, cyclones, blizzards, tornados, waterspouts, cloudbursts, anything in fact which will afford a change of weather even at the expense of all his wife's relations. But, if he is wise, he will not confess this weakness to a Californian. During our sojourn a man was arrested in Los Angeles for beating his wife, and it came out at his trial that he knocked her down with the family thermometer because she had complained that the temperature did not fall low enough in a California winter.

Once, and once only, we had snow on the level, and it scarcely remained long enough to permit a snowball to be made. That was on March 2 and 3, 1896, and the whole country turned out, including



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the governor of the state, to investigate the phenomenon. When we arose that morning the ground was dusted over with snow, and through the cool, snow-scented air every wind waft brought the heavy perfume of orange blossoms. The sky was overcast. Great clouds rolled down the mountain slopes, coming and going and changing shape every few minutes, while through the otherwise quiet air, from some height above the clouds, wild geese were screaming discontentedly on their way seaward. Whenever the clouds lifted, there, on the bold summits of the Sierra, the snow lay piled, and in the canons back among the mountains we heard the sullen reverberation of thunder peals rolling like the sound of some titanic drum calling to battle the powers of evil. The power of prose is inadequate to do justice to the weirdness and beauty of the scene, and even the following attempt to describe it in verse falls far short of conveying the proper impression :

*A Canuck down South.*

A WINTER DAY IN THE SIERRA.

O'er the Sierra scarce the moon yestre'en  
Was risen, to flood each sombre peak with  
light,  
Ere came a cloud host through the gusty  
night,  
Storming the crags. Sheer canon walls be-  
tween,  
They swept, and hid bare ledge and living  
green.  
Hoarse thunder pealed from unseen height  
to height,  
As though the vast hills boasted of their  
might,  
Though Chaos' self upon them seemed to  
lean.  
Dawn drew aside night's veil of mist, and  
came  
Across the hills. The clouds retired,  
and lo!  
On every wind swept crag, as Day look-  
ed forth,  
Bright in the southern sunshine gleamed  
the snow,  
A vision of the unforgotten North  
'Twixt golden skies and poppy fields aflame.

IN THE VALLEY.

Snow on the hills, but in the valley, flow-  
ers,  
Poppies aflame and orange blooms whose  
scent

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With the faint odor of the snow is blent.  
Snow on the peaks, but in the canons,  
showers,

And torrents drinking strength from stormy  
hours.

The geese wheel seaward through the  
clouds half spent,

Fleeing the snow and screaming discon-  
tent,

But in the vale birds trill in odorous bow-  
ers.

Summer is in the vale, though in the  
heights

The bandit Winter lurks to seize his prey.  
Still springs the grain, vines grow and  
fruit delight's

Sun and soft winds through many a gold-  
en day

In many an Eden valley, nestling warm  
Below the stern Sierra, wrapped in  
storm.

The summer of southern California  
corresponds in its effect with our winter.  
It is the fallow season, during which  
the soil bakes and brings nothing forth.  
The trees do not sit in sackcloth, but  
they certainly don ashes enough to sat-  
isfy the greatest mourner at the wailing  
place of the Jews, till the whole country

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looks like a tramp badly in need of soap. Even in winter there is an occasional Sant'Anna which sweeps up the dust till it shrouds the hills and obscures the very sun, and that dust will remain floating in the atmosphere for several days, without, however, affecting the lungs. Farther north, in Utah, we heard of a similar storm which so coated the telegraph wires and poles with salt that a hose reel had to be called into requisition. A common error concerning the California summer is that it is unendurably hot. The story is often told of the bad Californian who died, and after a day or two in the place modern theology does not believe in, sent back for his blankets. Californians tell that story, but they tell it is a man from Yuma, Arizona, where, it is said, the hens lay hard-boiled eggs in winter. From what I could gather about the California summer, the thermometer is entirely to blame. It persists in trying to make people believe it is overworked.

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In this dry climate, even in winter, I have known it go up to a hundred and twenty, when the heat was really no more oppressive than it would be at Montreal with the thermometer at eighty. Heat out there is not oppressive, but pleasant, if somewhat enervating. One just wants to lie out and soak in it. I do not mean perspire, for that is a rare phenomenon. And if one feels too hot he has only to go around the house into the shade, and put on an overcoat. Often one might see a man go down the sunny side of a street in Los Angeles with his coat over his arm, while on the opposite side his friends were wearing overcoats. At sundown the man who has no overcoat is like to perish with cold. These peculiarities of climate explain why ladies are to be seen dressed in muslins and with gay sunshades, while around their necks are twined huge furs.

It rains about a fortnight, off and on, during the winter or rainy season. Then

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from the middle of May to the end of October there is never a cloud in the sky. Once in a dozen years a section of the Pacific Ocean that has lost its way runs up against a Sierra peak, and there is a cloudburst. One such visited Sierra Madre in 1894. It dropped in for five minutes, and by that time the main stret was a foaming torrent flowing breast high. One man told me that he had not seen such an active movement in real estate since the boom. Mountain property that even the boom could not sell was carried down and turned into town lots. He himself had everything clean washed off his land except the mortgage, and that, he said, he had to liquidate himself. The canons were roaring sluices, filled to the brim with whirling whitecaps that bore down everything before them, even vast trees and huge boulders, and ploughed across the country roads, cutting deep trenches. And to make matters worse, the poet of the Los Angeles 'Times' came out

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simultaneously with a poem in blank verse, beginning—

Drop, gentle dews, from heaven till the  
mirth-

Ful earth is moved with an ecstatic thrill.

He who imagines that because two nations speak the same language, they must of necessity go hand in hand, like loving children, through the world has never read the history of Greece, and knows nothing of the real feeling which the United States entertains towards England and Canada. We were in California during the Venezuelan trouble, and the best I can say for the spirit of the United Statesians is that those who do not hate us, have no more love for us than they have for Germans, Turks or Fiji Islanders. Our one terror was that the editor of the Los Angeles 'Times,' a mild mannered, kindly gentleman in private life, would leave his sub-editor to attend to the ferocious editorials against all things British, and girding on his sword again, make a descent upon Sierra



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Madre, and butcher us one and all. He would have had some difficulty, however, for the Canadians were in pretty strong force there, while the entire state could, and would, have afforded a battalion to defend the flag that for a thousand years has braved the battle and the breeze. There is not, in fact, a Californian in California, or, at least, they are very scarce. Bees gather where there is honey, and the state is full of shrewd down-easters, canny Scotchmen, stalwart Chinese, quaint Japanese, Englishmen and Canadians. If the flood were repeated, and California spared, the races of man would not lack representation. One cannot throw a stone anywhere in California without hitting a Canadian. A Canadian has been mayor of Los Angeles, a Canadian has been president of the Chamber of Commerce in the same city, a Canadian is at the head of several railways, and he has Canadian brakemen and conductors under him. There are Canadian physi-

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cians, engineers and ranchers. I have met Canadian cowboys. The British vice-consul is a Torontonion. Ontario, the model colony of the state, was founded by Canadians, they throng Redlands and Riverside, and in one town they elected a Canadian mayor and board of aldermen, as a protest against the tail-twisters. The only place I did not find a Canadian was in gaol, but I think Diogenes will rectify that if he keeps on.

They do not really speak English in California. When people go there first, they call a burro a donkey, but when they have resided there a while they call a donkey a burro, realizing the value of foreign words in cultured speech. Since we have returned I am always, quite inadvertently, calling a horse a broncho; I have ceased to canter, and now lope; every back yard is a corral, and garden a ranch. We no longer water our flowers, we irrigate them, and I never borrow a quarter, though I sometimes strike a friend for two bits.

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In this way my friends know I have travelled. A few days before we left, Diogenes came to me and said, that as I was going, he had no longer an incentive to be idle, and so had gone to work. I asked him what kind of work he was doing, and he said he was a solicitor.

‘A what!’ I said.

‘A solicitor.’

‘How much did you pay for your degree?’

‘Nothing. I just made up my mind I would like the work.’

‘Your usual modesty. Because you manage to keep out of gaol, you fancy you know something of law.’

‘Who said anything about law,’ he cried, indignantly, ‘I’m going to sell bicycles.’

And then I learned that in California a canvasser is a solicitor.

Our Arcadia was not without its myths and legends, its oracles and seers. One can best arrive at the vices and virtues of a people by reading the adver-

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tisements in the daily press. The people may indignantly repudiate a charge of superstition or gullibility, but if the papers are filled with fortune-tellers' cards and patent medicine and specialist advertisements, it is not because the advertisers are eager to add to the revenue of the press. The columns of the southern California press are filled with such things. Then there is always a column devoted to business chances, some of the bargains offered being truly generous. One I remember was an offer of a half interest for one hundred dollars of a business that brought in two hundred dollars per month. If the advertiser had braved it out a fortnight, he might have been his own partner.





## CHAPTER V.

### IN THE SIERRA.

Nineteen of the Sierra peaks rise to a height of ten thousand feet, and seven of them rise still higher, until Mount Whitney wears the crown, rising to the heavens to the height of 14,900 feet. Some of these summits are still warm with volcanic heat. There they stand, white-hooded, with glaciers moving along their flanks, as if a thousand years were but as yesterday, letting loose the mountain streams that go singing down to the sea. There is the divine sculpture of the rocks, the lakes that mirror those eternal ramparts, the great forests that sing in the storm and sigh in the summer breeze and the groups of sequoia overmatching in height and circumfer-

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ence any other conifers on the globe. There the clouds come down and kiss the mountains, and the lesson is renewed every day of eternal repose and majesty and strength. The mountains are not solitary, but are rich in floral and animal life. There butterflies flit and birds sing and huge grizzly bears come out of caves and caverns. There the mariposa lily unfolds its petals and the snow plant, red as blood, springs in a day mysteriously out of the margin of receding banks of snow. And there the lakes repose in bowls with the mountains for rims.'

These words of Senator Perkins are very pretty and very true, but one has to run almost throughout the state to see all that he depicts. On a more moderate scale, however, almost any portion of the mountain region affords such beauty and even approximately such grandeur, and no small portion of our pleasure while at Sierra Madre was derived from watching the ever-changing aspect

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of the hills and wandering among their verdant canons and upon their lofty heights.

When we arrived at our cottage home in Sierra Madre the children were no sooner out of the carriage before they clamored to be taken up the mountains that seemed to rise out of our back yard. It was almost impossible to convince ourselves, much less them, that the first outlier of the range was quite half a mile away, and it was still more difficult to believe that those rock masses were towering up four, five and six thousand feet. The only occasion when a proper estimate of the height of the range could be formed was upon a cloudy day, when the mists would ebb and flow. Then, while the upper part of the range would be wholly hidden, some magnificent knoll that on fine days we mistook for a gentle elevation would stand out against the background of fleecy white, towering up to twice the height of our own Mount Royal. Ten minutes later



*In the Sierra.*

the clouds would part, and that hill would sink into insignificance and become merged once more in the general contour of the range. Morning, noon and night, the hills seemed instinct with life. Even in the sunshine and basking under a cloudless sky, they changed from hour to hour ; and in the monotony of our California life we grew to love them and to watch their every mood. On them alone was to be seen any semblance of the green robe to which we were accustomed and for which we vainly yearned in the general landscape of the more level valley. Sometimes, too, a careless hand would start a fire, and all night long it would seethe and billow far up among the stars, sometimes creeping like a fiery serpent around a projecting crag and sometimes rushing up a piny canon, which at dawn gleamed, a blackened ruin, in the rising sun.

Among these hills and upon their very summits are to be found sanitoriums where the consumptive flees from the

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great flood of death which is constantly rising about the race of man. Mount Lowe and Wilson's Peak are two such, adjacent to Sierra Madre, both attainable by trails and the former reached also by a mountain railway rivalling the Rigi. On the trails, especially that to Wilson's Peak, the burro is used, an animal which has done as much for the development of California as the railway itself, for without the burro to bear the pioneer and his pack over and among the mountains California had hardly even yet stood in need of the iron horse.

The burro is not quite a donkey, though I doubt whether his own mother could explain the difference. He is a kind of shetland pony run to ears, or more correctly a mongrel or poor relation of every member of the equine race. He is not described in Dr. Goldsmith's 'Animated Nature,' for obvious reasons. His movements are so slow that physicians prescribe burro riding as a sedative. It is impossible to catch any disease on burro

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back, not even locomotor ataxia. He has a voice nearly as big as his ears and as musical as a boiler factory. On the other hand, if the burro is not fast, he is safe. His surefootedness in narrow places is the envy of politicians, and when we decided that it would be a pleasant departure to celebrate Christmas Day by an open-air picnic among the mountains, we decided also that we would make the excursion on burro back.

Wilson's Peak is reached by two trails, one a waggon road from Pasadena, which concerns us no farther, and one the old trail from Sierra Madre, on which two counterfeit bills could scarcely pass one another. When in a generous mood this latter is about six feet wide, but it frequently narrows to less than three. A yard is enough for a burro, since he always finds four feet to walk on, but the accommodation seems unduly limited where there is a rise of some thousands of feet on the one side and a sheer fall of other thousands on the outer edge,

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especially if the burro pauses absent-mindedly and reaches out after a spray of leaves, while the ground begins to slip from under him. In such a case the rider wishes for the wings of a dove or for a parachute.

The road to the foot of the trail skirts the flank of the Sierra, under majestic uplifts, in contour not unlike the triangular folds of silk shopkeepers display in their windows. At evening the departing rays of the sun light up and mellow these peaks until they resemble silk in texture also, but in the unromantic day the sparse pines that cling to each rounded mass make a pate not unlike that of Diogenes, who has a hair restorer which he recommends to every one as infallible. Immediately below, here and there, amid slender leaved peppers, with drooping scarlet berries, or the eucalpti, Australian visitants which shed their bark and not their leaves, or oftener still among graceful palms and vast leaved bananas, the cottages of Sierra Madre cling to the

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hillsides, always surrounded by lemon and orange groves, at that time heavy with golden spheres. The San Gabriel valley lies outspread beyond, white in patches of arid, cactus breeding mesas and in places green with fruit plantations; and still farther off the horizon is serried with a line of mountains, rise above rise, the higher peaks dazzling with their crowns of snow. And over all that day was such peace that the buzzing of a fly or clear call of the cicada through the ambient heat was soul stirring as the bugle blare to troops inactive on a battle's edge.

But there was not one blade of grass. Here, indeed, distance lends enchantment. Wherever we might ride, save in the mountains, nature mourned for her children. Her sweet form lay bare to curious eyes, lacking the soft, clinging drapery of verdure that tempts the soul as the Greek gown lures to love. But all was shortly to change with the coming of spring, a season more ethereal than any other land can boast, and amid

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'The lisp of leaves and ripple of rain.'  
earth was to rejuvenate herself and mesa  
and bare hillside to don an emerald gar-  
ment the like to which few other lands  
might show.

Even though grass was lacking I was  
charmed with the scene, and said so to  
Diogenes, who was riding in the rear.  
I had not turned my head and when I  
was answered by a word much used in  
excommunications, I turned round in  
amazement, only to find that the epithet  
had not been intended for me. Diogenes  
is built like a pair of compasses, and  
when he rides a burro is apt to stub his  
toe unless he keeps his knees as high as  
his head. He had forgotten this while ad-  
miring the prospect, and had let his legs  
hang down, whereupon he ran the gamut  
of evolution and became transformed  
from a quadruped into a biped. His  
burro slipped from under and left him  
standing in the road. He resigned his  
position as superintendent of the local  
Sunday-school the next day, although I  
had told him I would not turn informer.

### *In the Sierra.*

The Princess's daughter, who is incidentally mine also, five years of age, had her own burro to ride and was secured to the saddle. She rode astride. The side-saddle can be seen in southern California, in museums, where the new woman can laugh at it and scoff at her mother. A few such saddles are kept by liverymen for the use of tourists from the east, but as a general rule women in this region ride nature's way, and I have seen so many girls ride astride, so many bloomers and hundred-button gaiters in California that I am sure I will blush at the suggestiveness of the side-saddle for many a day to come. The first time I saw a young woman riding in bloomers I thought an accident had happened, and took to the woods to relieve her embarrassment. *Mais nous avons changé tout cela*, and, after all, bloomers are not immoral—they are only distressingly ugly. If women want more freedom in their garments, let them by all means dress like a man, and a graceful shape will look



### *A Canuck down South.*

sweet and modest enough. Compromises are never artistic.

We used the Mexican saddle, though a saw-horse or a tea-tray would have done as well, for any one who would fall off a burro would be immediately arrested for attempted suicide. The Mexican saddle has huge stirrups of wood or leather that would fit a Chicago girl, and has also a platform in front upon which to stand while admiring the scenery. This pommel, as it is called, was, I am told, devised by a vigilance committee to prevent cruelty to animals, as it requires a limited corporation to ride a saddle so equipped. A dear fat friend of ours could not accompany us because, as he jocularly remarked, he could not 'stomach' a Mexican saddle, unless he rode backwards, in which case the draught between the burro's ears would give him lumbago.

Shortly we reached the commencement of the trail, and I may as well confess that it was not long before I had to be careful when shutting my mouth not to

### *In the Sierra.*

bite my heart in two. The heir to my debts, aged three, who sat at my saddle bow, added to my delight at intervals by asking me what I would do were the burro to fall down this or that abyss, at the bottom of which the pine trees looked like grass and the rushing torrent like a silver thread. At times, one foot was contracting rheumatism from the draught of some unfathomable gorge over which it hung, while its fellow had difficulty in avoiding a square league of mountain. Once the child leaned over to pluck some blossoms growing on the edge of a precipice. He did not get them, and I got only half a breath, while the burro cast a reproachful glance at both of us as he swung suddenly in towards safety. I gave him no sympathy, however, as for some time he had been displaying a savage joy in walking upon the outermost edge of the trail, heedless of my nerves and of the interest of the company which carries an insurance upon my life. I had frequently heard of this peculiarity

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of the burro and never thought of the explanation of it until I saw Diogenes on one. It is a mistake to say the burro takes the outer edge of the trail because he is accustomed to carrying packs, he does so either to get room for his own or his rider's ears.

We reached a height from which we could look down upon San Gabriel Valley, and what a sight that was! The orange and lemon trees looked like those pigmy plants the Chinese excel in cultivating. The scattered cottages looked like dolls' houses, the orchards like checkerboards, the waste lands showed their dry watercourses which give them the local name of washes, hills once respectable became mere ant hills, and Pomona and Los Angeles seemed near enough to one another to have the one board of aldermen. And beyond, through a gap in the distant mountains, gleamed the Pacific, a broad sheet of silver, with Santa Catalina Island set in its midst, like a sapphire.

### *In the Sierra.*

There is one loop on the trail, scratched on the face of a perpendicular cliff, from which we looked across a canon and saw where our burros were about to carry us. It was not a soothing prospect. A cloud or two hid the view, somewhat, but, all the same, we noted the sheer rise from base to summit certainly not less than three thousand feet, and up the face of that magnificent uplift winds the trail, a mere line in the sky, enough to make one dizzy merely to look at it. We had a camera with us and a picture of one of us on that cliff now adorns my library. I wanted to get a companion picture of Diogenes falling down the canon, but he very selfishly declined to accommodate me. He could have done it just as easy as not, since the trail is only two feet wide at one of the most dangerous places. Montreal readers will get some idea of this trail if I ask them to pile several French Church towers one upon the other and then ride round the top-most coping, till they have accom-

### *A Canuck down South.*

plished a few miles. Nay, this is below the truth, for there are places where we skirted precipices at whose base the French Church towers could scarcely have been distinguished. And yet we were not half-way up that tower of Babel of mountains, giant reared to heaven, beyond the reach of flood, silent, deserted, awful in their titanic majesty.

After an eternity of this tight-rope business the scene changed. We were still creeping skyward, but were now so deep among the hills that the ravines began to grow shallower. And then, amid the shifting shadows of that golden day, flung from aromatic pines, steeping the soul in memories of Canadian woods, I drew one easy breath at last. We were not at the summit, for we contemplated returning the same day to close our Christmas in Canadian fashion with a heavy dinner and an evening round a roaring grate fire. But we were so high that we feared our burros' ears would disturb the astral maps, and had St. Peter

### *In the Sierra.*

appeared to ask for our passports we would scarcely have been surprised, although Diogenes would certainly have been embarrassed for once.

Our picnic was a success, and none of us will ever forget that Christmas meal amid the shifting shadows of the pines upon a golden, glowing afternoon, beside a purling stream, crystal clear, ice cold. Our ride homeward was thrilling, but uneventful. The burros actually trotted at times, and the rattle of stones loosened by their dainty feet to bound and rebound into the sullen gorges was not the sweetest nor the most reassuring music in a timid ear.

That was my first venture among the Sierra, but their spell was upon me, and many a day thereafter I used to roam on foot upon the same trail, visiting canons and crags, at times with rifle or revolver, at times trusting entirely to the charm of nature for entertainment. One deserted shack, I shall not say where, for fear of reprisals, once tempted me to

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investigate. Below stairs it was innocent enough, but venturing further, into the attic, to which early gymnastic training alone enabled me to hoist myself, I found that I was among the haunts of 'moon-shiners.' There was no liquor, but there was case upon case of little flasks, dry as myself, awaiting the night, when stealthily through the gloom to that lonely spot some desperate law-breaking private distiller, with revolver at his belt, would steal from some still more lonely recess among the mountains with a suspicious barrel upon the back of a secretive burro and make those particles of blown glass capable of administering to the joys and sorrows of his fellow-men. Sometimes I would, when pining for the snows of Canada, pluck a rose in our garden, stick it in my button hole and breast the trail, to luxuriate within the half hour in banks of snow. Once when I had been thus engaged I found on my return, within a few hours, that a friend had been wrestling with the angel of



*In the Sierra.*

God and secured the blessing of immortality, by so slender a hair is life held in that land of invalids. He had been scarce half an hour dead when I arrived, yet by that time his body was on the road to Pasadena in an undertaker's van, and all the world was changed for those who loved him. Some people have presentiments of such things, but I never have. Nothing important can happen to those the Princess loves but what she feels it. Once she hurried me upon a railway journey on what I thought was but a wild-goose chase, upon one such presentiment and we arrived as though in response to the telegram we had never received. And she knows by intuition whether I have been delayed by business or a friend at the club, which renders her a somewhat embarrassing wife, or would do so if I were not the saint I am. Psychologists may explain this as they will, the fact remains, as I can attest. Perhaps one must truly live in and for others before such a gift is vouchsafed. The selfish are beneath it.

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It was my good fortune to form one of a party invited to dedicate a new trail through the Sierra. A number of ladies had decided to be the first whose skirts would flutter at that high altitude, and the officials of the trail invited a number of men to accompany them in self-defence. We formed a gay cavalcade, and all the ladies rode astride (the Princess was not with us). A temporary trail, corkscrewing up a dreadful slope, almost made some of us slip over our burro's tail, a possibility which was, however, partly robbed of its terrors by the fact that, in such an event, we knew we would land in the lap of some of the opposite sex behind us, the cavalcade being in such manner arranged. The completed trail was not different from any other except that nature was still virgin about us. No vandal hand had cut down the tawny madrena or still more swarthy and snaky manzanita. The holly berries flashed their scarlet glow upon us, the bay tree

*In the Sierra.*

fanned us and the live oak scattered its shelly leaves and tremulous shadows everywhere. Graceful ferns and starry yucca pleased the eye, and we needed no warning to avoid that slender-stemmed, dark-leaved skulker among the heavier wood, for we knew the poison oak of old. So, on and up we mounted, now looking across a canon to the sheer sides of Monrovia mountain towering 4,410 feet into the air, now looking down to catch a glimpse of tapering pines and to hear the murmur of some mountain stream.

When the trail became too narrow for our burros we advanced on foot. The line of the road had only been marked out, and we had some training in true mountaineering. At one point it was necessary to step from one spur of rock to another with a gorge seven hundred feet in depth yawning hungrily below. The ladies were more indefatigable than the men, and it shortly transpired that their enthusiasm arose from the fact that

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a few hundred yards in advance on the line of the trail was a mountain stream upon whose brink no woman had ever stood, and they were determined to visit and christen it. The chosen sponsor was a charming young lady, whose Christian name was Oline, and after her the stream was to be named, with the prefix 'Saint,' 'all places and things being saints hereabouts, if Oline isn't,' as a maiden friend remarked. The ceremony was short and simple. Standing on the ferny margin of the pool, which murmured down a shady and rocky canon, the slender, girlish figure bent, and in the hollow of her hand took up a sunny wavelet with which she performed the mystic rite. It was my privilege as poet laureate to record the christening in simple verse, as follows: —

*In the Sierra.*

THE POOL OF SANT' OLIVE.

Ere yet the Spanish cavalier  
For this new world set sail,  
Ere yet the Padres came anear  
San Gabriel's sunny vale,  
Ere yet the thirst for gold drew men  
Across the western hills,  
I rippled down this rocky glen,  
The happiest of rills.

The shadows of the spreading oak  
Oft lay upon my breast ;  
Oft through the brown madronas broke  
The bear upon his quest.  
Past starry yuccas to my brink  
At many a crimson dawn  
The mountain lion came to drink,  
and oft a timid fawn.

The golden moments came and went  
Of many a sunny year,  
And still I rippled on, content  
And solitary here.  
At times a weary miner came  
And quaffed my cooling stream.  
At times I saw the camp fire flame  
Of hardy hunters gleam.

*A Canuck down South.*

Though oft I paused to hear some bird  
Trill in the leaves above,  
A maid I never saw nor heard,  
Nor knew the name of love.  
Oh, there was never rivulet  
So merry in a glen ;  
But now I never can forget,  
Nor happy be again.

She came in thoughtless girlish mood,  
The dizzy trail along.  
Upon my ferny marge she stood  
And listened to my song.  
I saw her and I leapt for glee  
In many a lucent wave,  
And when she stooped to drink from me  
My very heart I gave.

She passed, and now no more I sing  
Among the granite hills ;  
Instead, my ceaseless murmuring  
The sombre canon fills.  
Oh, ye to whom that maid divine  
Hath also heartless been,  
Come join your mournful plaint with mine,  
The pool of Sant' Oline.



## ROUGHING IT.

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The luxuries of to-day are the necessities of to-morrow. We had been blessed in Canada with a comfortable, well-built and well-furnished home, and had followed our own habits and customs. But in California we, in company with thousands of other winterers, found ourselves obliged to conform to new customs, adopt new habits and rough it somewhat disagreeably in a house lacking many conveniences, and which, while said to be furnished, resembled nothing else so much as a Canadian home after seizure for rent, inasmuch as it contained only the bare necessities which cold-



### *A Canuck down South.*

hearted justice deems imperatively requisite for the existence of even a bankrupt.

One rents a furnished house in Sierra Madre without the formality of an inventory, but one has to pay rent in advance, the landlord taking no risks of one's death before the month is up; and as the first month's rent would pay for the entire furniture, making an inventory would be too much like work for the average Sierra Madran. We could probably have taken away the house at the expiry of our six months' term without any questions being asked—at all events, we thought we had paid about all that it was worth.

In our case, however, we heard long after that there had been an inventory. The house agent from whom we had taken the cottage knew nothing of it, and no tenant ever saw it, but it reposed in the charge of a friend of our estimable landlady, our landlady being an absen-

### *Roughing It.*

tee, and afforded the lady who held it the congenial pleasure of privately investigating the damage done by each outgoing vandal, and retailing it to her cronies over a cup of tea. No official complaint had ever been lodged, but by this merciful dispensation of providence a certain stratum of society was entertained and occupied at a very small expense. I imagine the inventory ran about as follows. It will do for many a cottage in the place, and, indeed, Diogenes says that at least two invalids lay down and died of sheer chagrin when they heard how luxuriously we lived.

#### INVENTORY.

Best bedroom—The usual hard-wood set found in seaside hotels, bureau mirror making a hat on the left ear appear to be on straight, carpet made by Noah after he had trodden the wine-press.

Worst bedroom—One cheap folding-bed, variegated with a chintz front, war-

## *A Canuck down South.*

ranted better than an alarm clock at daybreak, one enamelled chair, formerly white. The occupant of this room might use the kitchen sink for a washstand and finish dressing at the mirror in the other room. The floor had a straw matting on parts of it.

Dining-room—Hardwood table and four chairs. There wouldn't have been room for any more, anyway. When we had guests, we moved the table into the parlor. This room also contained a diminutive stove, called a 'Chromo,' and it was one. It was spavined in the off hind leg, and was rarely on speaking terms with the chimney.

Parlor—One antique rug (antique sounds better than antiquated), eked out with pieces of straw matting, an intoxicated bamboo easel warranted to fall upon the nearest person, a visitor for choice, in order to afford a theme for conversation. ('How horrid! I do hope it did not hurt you. No? How

### *Roughing It.*

fortunate. It didn't injure your bonnet? No? I'm glad. It's such a beautiful bonnet; last year's styles were charming, weren't they?") There was a bamboo lounge in the parlor, the only comfortable piece of furniture in the house, and there were six chairs, no two alike, none upholstered, and three were rockers. There were two small tables.

Cutlery, kitchen utensils, china (no, I mean crockery), and linen to match. We had napkins on Sunday, till our own supplies turned up.

In describing their contents, I have incidentally mentioned all the rooms of our house, except the kitchen, which could be called a room only by courtesy. The architects of the houses in Sierra Madre were dyspeptic, and always forgot to make provision for the kitchen, which had to be subsequently added by making use of a cupboard. I do not think there was a kitchen in the place any bigger than the buffet in a Pullman car, and

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some were so small that it was impossible to avoid 'barking' one's elbows. Be it understood, once for all, that the whole time we were housekeeping in Arcadia, we had to do our own work. Had we been willing even to pay twenty dollars a month for a domestic, we would have had to put her in the cellar, or sleep there ourselves, the second contingency being the more probable in the land of freedom, where even the wash-lady pursues her vocation 'to accommodate,' and from whom we feel that we should receive our laundry on bended knees. We did our own work, I repeat, and my share of it was that of Robert Louis Stevenson, the lighting of the fire and the preparation for if not always of the breakfast. The Princess seldom rose until she had her matitudinal cup of tea, but when she did arise, my labors of the day were over.

The lighting of the fire is a question which has disturbed many a household,

### *Roughing It.*

and it is a wise husband who bows to the inevitable. When we first saw our kitchen it had at one side a pretty little mechanism that I thought should be placed upon the parlor mantel. I was looking for my magnifying glass in order to study the details when the house agent said with enthusiasm,

‘There! what do you think of that?’

‘It’s very pretty,’ I said, but why isn’t it in the parlor under a glass case? And, excuse me, but what is it ’

Mr. T— groaned.

‘What is it!’ he re-echoed. ‘Why, man, that’s the stove, one of the best in the place.’

And it was the stove, the only cooking stove we had, if I except the gasoline demon we knew better than to experiment with, not being certificated engineers. And on that microscopic thing, and in its still more microscopic oven we cooked many a good meal. Our Thanksgiving turkey was cooked in it. We cooked the front half the day before and

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the rear half on Thanksgiving Day propping up the half that wouldn't go into the oven by resting it on a chair.

The lighting of that stove was an operation of exceeding nicety, and was accomplished as follows. I first put in four square inches of newspaper, preferably an anti-British editorial from the Los Angeles 'Times,' which was not merely always certain to be dry, but contained so many inflammable statements that I kept such clippings in a tin box for fear of spontaneous combustion. I then added a sliver of dry wood, or a split match, and topped off with a splinter of live oak. If the live oak was green, as it generally was, I added a spoonful of coal oil, and went out through the window. When the meal was cooked, we blew out the fire.

The fuel used in Sierra Madre was scrub oak cut by the Mexicans on the waste lands, and sold the same day at about eight dollars per cord, and a soft coal from New Mexico, which sold at



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eleven dollars per ton. The coal burned away with great rapidity, and the scrub oak would go out the instant one's attention was relaxed. There was no possibility of maintaining a fire through the night unless one sat up with it, the stoves were so miserably small. We sometimes got a little comfort by taking them to bed with us as foot-warmers, but notwithstanding all our ingenuity, there was seldom a morning during our stay that it did not require a great effort of will to put foot to the floor or when the thermometer in the room registered higher than forty-five. If one made a bolt to the open air with his clothes over his arm, and dressed there, the air was balmy enough, but a modest man like myself did this but seldom.

The house had no attic, but to make things even it had a cellar, where the wind piped eerily through the night. There also all the cats of the neighborhood held nightly revel just under my bed, a single thickness of planking inter-

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vening. As the cellar was reached only by an outside door, a white-robed, shivering figure, clutching a huge navy revolver, might often have been seen stealthily stealing through the gloom beneath the starry canopy of heaven to apply the cloture to that inharmonious gathering; and five minutes after, when I had got back to bed and had just begun to distinguish my feet from lumps of ice, the charivari would recommence. It did no good to stop holes or lock doors, the cats pawed their way in, burrowing like gophers, and as for shooting any, the man who has not tried to fire a revolver when he can not see it, does not know how far astray a point blank shot will go.

This kind of house and this kind of discomfort is shared by the bulk of those who winter in California for their health. But hotel life, which we also tried, and life in the cities, is charming.

After we had been some time in California Diogenes and I developed an in-

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tense scorn of the useless, lazy life of the natives, and decided (for a week) to set a shining example to the State. It was not long before we had devoured all the chickens of the neighborhood, but that is not saying much, the chickens of California are raised by incubator, and fed by hand, and cost their weight in gold to bring them into the world. And they no sooner see the kind of country they have got into than they pine away. Diogenes and I decided that there was money for two clever men in a chicken ranch, and we started one. It was a beautiful ranch, electro-plated wire fence, fine view of the Sierra, one clump of grass six inches square, imported at great expense, and a hen house that was the pride of Sierra Madre. The incubator was exquisitely polished and varnished, and the oil we burned cost a fabulous sum, while the thermometer was one that could give any other thermometer in the place a start of ten degrees and beat it out of sight before the afternoon. It

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had one of those affairs in it for registering the maximum temperature and we had only to hold it over the lamp a few minutes, and it would keep up the temperature of that incubator during the coldest night, even if the lamp went out, Diogenes called me one night just to see it. We were shivering, with blankets wrapped round us like Pueblo Indians, but through the glass of the incubator that needle in the inside of the thermometer was sticking as close to a hundred as if the lamp hadn't been exhausted long before. And the mercury wasn't near it, either, But we never seemed to get any chickens, so we used to buy them from the butcher and pay sixty cents apiece for them, and it took two to make a meal for one person.

Besides, we had trouble with the incubator. It is bad enough to see a full-sized hen fussing over a solitary chick, but it passes the bounds of tolerance to see a big incubator clucking about the yard, scratching the paint off the fence

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and trying to convince a drooping chicken that it is fattening diet. And to see an incubator stand ruefully beside the irrigation tanks while some duckling swam out on the water was enough to give a man a delirium. No, when we began to have dreams like that, we knew it was our reason or the incubator that would have to go.

We would have gone into market gardening but that seemed overdone. Vegetables were a drug on the market. When I first dealt with John Wee Chen Yen, and asked him for tyenty-five cents worth, he got down, phlegmatically, and began to unharness his team.

‘What’s the matter?’ I said.

‘Me keep horses; you keep rest,’ he said, and John’s vegetable waggon was larger than a hay cart. But they can not grow a vegetable in California to compare, for taste, with those of the East. They are like the climate, monotonously alike. Of what use is a pumpkin that cannot be moved without a der-

### *A Canuck down South.*

rick and a team of horses, if it will not make a New England pumpkin pie? Californians will say we didn't know how to cook them. Our butcher used that excuse. He had sold us the last hen in the state, one which had been brought in by the early missionaries, and of course I broke my carver on it, and subsequently splintered the axe-handle. Then I complained to him.

'How long did you cook it?' he asked.

'An hour.'

'You should have cooked it three.'

And when I told him that with fuel as expensive as it was he would have to bring me a government contract with each hen, he merely laughed at me.

After our unfortunate experience with the chicken corral, Diogenes and I cast about for some other occupation. At first our inclinations were towards something involving brain work, something which we could do while sitting on the verandah smoking and discussing plans. But after a while we realized that there

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is no labor so dignified as manual labor. We would become horny handed sons of toil, and after a few years maybe we might become walking delegates and Napoleonic leaders of a strike. We asked the Princess what she thought. She told us she thought that 'was about the kind of workmen we would be and of course, that compliment from her settled the matter. So we went out to see if there was any job to be had washing oranges. In some localities, apparently, where the fogs reach, oranges get touched with a kind of smut, which is scrubbed off after plucking, and laborers get about three cents per box of two hundred. We made six cents each that day, enough to make a Mexican feel like a nabob. We would have made more only we fell into a discussion as to what bank we would put our savings into, and, of course, our discussion was so bright that the other workers crowded round till the rancher came and said he would save us the trouble of quarrelling on the subject.



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We decided after that one experience of the grasping nature of capitalists that we would be our own masters, and with our wealth buy up the mortgage on that man's estate and squeeze him. I am glad now that we did not, for we might have found ourselves like many others in the region, tied for eternity to a ranch that barely paid expenses.

There was an old mine tunnel in the hills nearby, and we decided that where there was a mine shaft there was sure to be gold and silver. We had not read mine prospectuses for nothing. The mine was deserted, but we knew that the general thing is that the poor fellows who dig in and blast and get 'busted,' on a mine, leave off about six inches from the blind lead, or the hanging wall, or the matrix; so we determined to open up that half-foot. But there seemed to be a hitch somewhere, and after boring a hole and examining the rock we went back home and spent the afternoon

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pleasantly and instructively studying Mark Twain and Bret Hart.

With renewed courage we decided to prospect, especially as the guide books declared that the Sierras of Southern California have never been thoroughly prospected, and ought to contain untold mineral wealth. For a few days we wandered among the canyons and peaks, occasionally forgetting our object in the charm of the scenes. On the lower slopes the soft glow of the purple penstemon and the deep indigo of the larkspur diversified the scene, with an occasional flash of the scarlet larkspur, which is indigenous to California. The lavender tulips nodded across the plains, and in the washes the white petals of the tall bush poppy shone around a golden centre. Here and there among the rocks the mimulus was wreathing its orange and red, and the soft purple of the nightshade lighted up its deeper hues. The open slopes were thronged with sunflowers, and with the advent of spring

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the poppies had sprung up, like highlanders from the correi, and their fiery cross was blazing far and wide, visible even to the wondering sailors far out at sea for the color of the poppy is a landmark to the mariner upon that dreamy ocean.

On the higher levels or slopes the chaparral robed the hills in shaggy green, the mountain streams sang as they leaped from cliff to cliff. The white sage uplifted its tall spires, the yerba santa attracted the eye and the fragrance of the white and bluish bloom of the mountain mahogany was upon the air. Here the yucca lifted its lilies, the bunch grass grew and the vetches trailed their garlands of purple and green over the rusty white of the wild buckwheat. Willows and cottonwoods, sycamores and live oaks deepened the shadows, ferns depended from moist banks, and far aloft, thousands of feet above us we could see the sunlight silvering gigantic masses of granite, and hear the breezes whispering

## *Roughing It.*

among the pines that wound interminably upwards around the flanks of the Sierra, until lost amid the azure clouds where the condor was wheeling upon motionless wings. That was the kind of day labor Diogenes and I delighted in, but we found no gold.

One day Diogenes came to me and said we had been a pair of fools. I asked him to explain.

'Well, we haven't gone the right way about our prospecting. Listen to this, It's an account of the discovery of one of the richest veins in Colorado. 'Two prospectors who were grub staked by Mr. Tabor (since Senator), chanced to be crossing Fryer Hill and sat down to imbibe casual refreshment from a jug of whiskey. By the time they had become satisfactorily refreshed all kinds of ground looked alike to them, and without the slightest justification they began to dig where they had been sitting. They uncovered the ore body of the famous Little Pittsburg mine.'

## *A Canuck down South.*

There was silence for a few moments. Then I leaned forward.

'Did you say whiskey?'

'Yes.'

'Do you think it was United States whiskey?'

Diogenes did not say a word for a few minutes. Then his face lengthened.

'Because,' I continued, 'if it has to be United States whiskey, I am a prohibitionist.'

I have always felt proud that when the choice stood between a gold mine with (United States) whiskey and a poor but honest life with prohibition principles, I chose the better part. Diogenes has not yet discovered a gold mine, but I have my suspicions that he has tried to.

Throughout southern California, as indeed throughout any other country district where the residents are not themselves producers of their own food, the tradespeople call at the house for orders. The procession used to begin about seven

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in the morning in my time, when the grocery boy would pound on the door unceasingly until I rose from my beauty sleep to chide him. On the banks of the lower St. Lawrence they are more courteous. They don't knock; they just come right into the bedroom. I have known a bowing and gesticulating butcher enter the room of an astonished customer, with a leg of mutton in his hand, and expatiate on its merits while the mistress of the house said naughty words about him with her head under the bedclothes. After the grocer's boy would go away, happy for having ruined my rest, the milkman would drive up, deposit his self-sealing jars and rumble down the avenue. Then there would be a breathing spell for bath and breakfast.

When I say bath I speak with a mental reservation. There was one bath in Sierra Madre, and when it was being brought in it frightened the horses worse than a steam roller, and the Mexicans couldn't be got to go near the house

### *A Canuck down South.*

where it was for love or money. The man who had that bath kept it in his parlor, and those of us who were not so fortunate thought he only did it justice. Diogenes and I occasionally turned the hose on ourselves in the wood-shed, but as a general rule we bathed in sections, beginning at the head on Sunday morning and managing to reach the feet by Saturday night. As the largest vessel in the house was a dishpan, our tenacity of purpose can be understood. We would have preferred the hose process, but the water company sent us a letter that general irrigation was only permitted three days in each month.

After breakfast came a man who was our thorn in the flesh. Either he seldom had the article we wanted or was of the opinion that it was not good for us, for he invariably spent half an hour trying to persuade us to take something else and as he had a monopoly, the discussion usually terminated by his having his way. He had a cheerful air of superiority



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about him that made one willing to be an assassin, and he was a lightning calculator. While I would be laboriously calculating with pencil and paper what pounds and fractions of our purchases at varying prices and half cents came to, he would nonchalantly jot the total down in our book and drive away to instruct some one else in arithmetic. And to make matters worse, after I had worked the sum out by algebra, which is easier to me than arithmetic, I would find that he had been right after all.

Next came the fishmonger with oysters in tins and fresh salmon and halibut from the ocean and northern streams. After him the wine merchants would begin to arrive, half a dozen of them sometimes, and every one would insist upon my taking a glass whether I intended to purchase or not. By the time they were due Diogenes would be on hand to see that I had some one to help me, for it is too serious an insult to think of refusing the proffer. It would have been kindlier

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to kick them downstairs. I may say, en passant, that I do not too enthusiastically admire the wines of California, except the clarets, than which I do not hope to drink better; and claret was fifty cents per gallon in Sierra Madre. Water soon became good enough to wash in. The brandy of California requires to be tried to be appreciated, and after a man has thoughtlessly taken a glass of it, he is very likely to be tried himself, in the police court, for it is nearest to being liquid fire of any drink I know, and creates a perfect frenzy of intoxication. Diogenes says so, too. *Experte credo*, he says.

John Chinaman did not come with the commonalty; his visits took place in the afternoons. John is an important factor in California life. He has settled the servant girl question, for which he merits the legion d'honneur. Easterners at first shrink from his cat-like tread in the house, but soon become accustomed to it and by and bye get to wonder how

### *Roughing It.*

they ever tolerated Sally with her followers and her objection to cap and apron. In Sierra Madre John entered only incidentally into domestic life. He sold us our vegetables and washed our linen. I will not say that the same Chinaman did both, but I would hesitate to swear to the contrary in a court of law. I know that there were two rival market gardeners for John Wee Chen Yen, or Sunny Slope, assured us with dreadful solemnity that the 'oller feller' irrigated with sour water, though where he could have got it in that region of mountain streams I am unable to say. Those who judge Chinamen from the undersized specimens of eastern cities will be surprised when told that John in California is a stalwart, broad-shouldered fellow, who would cut a pretty figure in a regiment of the line. His visits were among the pleasant events of our monotonous days. He brought an air of cheerfulness with him that was contagious. His never unduly familiar man-

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ner always seemed to be conveying the sentiment that it was good to be alive, and that life had grown ever so much more delightful since our arrival. When we paid him in cash, he grew as shy as a maiden receiving her first offer, and was ill at ease until the mercenary transaction was over. When we ceased so to trouble him he would smile all over and 'mark' it on the wall with such delight that we began to think his country must be an Eden for impecunious men and to credit him with an insane desire to cover cottages with his quaint hieroglyphics. And when he went away he always said good-by so heartily that it sounded like a benediction. One couldn't spank the enfant terrible for an hour after. There are bad Chinamen, I have no doubt, very bad Chinamen, but before despising the Chinese nation it would be well for other nations to ascertain whether they, too, have not a few black sheep. If John likes to hit the pipe a little too much, John Bull and Brother Jonathan are by

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no means prohibitionists, and while John is revelling in heavenly dreams that even opium will not bring to the others, John Bull is belaboring his wife and Brother Jonathan challenging all creation to a round. All three may end in the same police court in California, and John may get the heaviest sentence, it is true, but that does not settle the superiority of race or morals.

We were not the only people who were roughing it in southern California. When the winds begin to blow keenly in the east, and the fallen leaves lie thick upon the sward, when the lilies that toil not disappear, so also disappear from familiar haunts others who do not spin, and like to whom Solomon in all his glory was never arrayed. The genus tramp, the palmers of the nineteenth century, stealing rides when they can, begging or walking, succeed, in some mysterious way, in crossing the arid plains and the cloud-hooded Rockies, and become a genuine and not altogether safe affliction in the

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Land of Sunshine. I do not think the Princess ever turned a beggar from the door, for she has a maxim that a meal can do no harm to any one, but by and by our tramps began to flock in from all quarters and capped the climax by stealing our very dinner on one occasion, after having been given a good breakfast. So at last I put up a sign at the turn of the road as follows:—

.....  
                                SOAP !  
.....  
. Tramps Accommodated with Soap, .  
.....  
. Water Supplied Opposite. .  
.....

This sign served its purpose, especially after I had erased the private marks of the fraternity. It was a source of pleasure to Diogenes and me to sit on the verandah and see a tramp come expectantly up the road till within sight of that sign. He would go up to it, and sometimes we would hear him soliloquize.

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'Soap, what's that? I never heard of it. Water supplied opposite. Who wants water? Only a fool would come to California for water. It looks risky. I guess I'll try next door.' And off he would go, looking anything but happy. **Sanborn Library**

Pasadena and Los Angeles turned all the tramps they caught to stone-breaking. One day was enough; they never stopped running till they reached the city limits. Another town kept a reservoir of water into which it tossed them, like witches of old and to the same purpose.

Before we found it absolutely necessary to set our faces against them, I occasionally spent a pleasant half hour with a tramp. These fellows are not lacking in intelligence, indeed it is their stock in trade. They expend as much energy and use up as much intellect in wheedling a dinner and avoiding work as would make a successful senior partner in a large business. And what a miserably poor return they get upon their investment. The man who, whether with truth or false-



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hood, at least entertained me with a description of his picturesque life and with tales of places he had visited, will some day be tossed from the car upon which he is stealing a ride, and the coroner will ask no embarrassing questions of the brakemen.

One of the customs we had brought with us from Canada was that of using ice in hot weather to preserve food and to cool our drinks, and, of course, we immediately ordered ice to be supplied daily. But we countermanded that order after the first bill came in. We found that we had luxuriously been consuming a dollar's worth of ice to preserve a fifty-cent breakfast and the ice never seemed to cool anything, anyway. California was always surprising us in some such simple matter. If we wanted a drink of cold water, we naturally ran it fresh from the tap, but when Diogenes wanted one he let it stand quite a while, and his was cooler than ours. And he told us that the use of ice was all tom-

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foolery so far as preserving meat was concerned. 'Hot weather here,' he said, 'may cook your meat, but it will not spoil it. But don't lay in a supply in rainy weather; or you will have to move into the next lot in an hour or two. And you'll be fortunate if the meat doesn't follow.' All the cottages have a kind of screen box nailed up on their shadiest side, and in this butter, meat and other perishable articles of diet are placed, in the open air, covered, to prevent their drying up.

Everything, or almost everything, was sold in Sierra Madre by weight, and this frequently included the purchaser. Travelling vans carry spring scales, such as are prohibited by Canadian law, and no two of these scales agree. The scale of one of our tradespeople made our grocer's pound weigh nineteen ounces, and I used to lie awake at night trying to decide whether, if I made trouble, the grocer or the other man would alter his scale. But the spring balance was not

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the only scale which deceived. Having gone to Sierra Madre for my health, I naturally was wont to weigh myself regularly. At our grocer's I weighed a hundred and twenty-four pounds. Two days later I weighed a hundred and twenty-seven at another grocer's, and went about praising Sierra Madre for its curative powers. A week later I was weighed at X's, and then turned the beam at a hundred and thirty. I began to think that I would soon require a derrick or a jack-screw to move myself about. But a day later I took to my bed and sent for the doctor and the undertaker. I had been weighed at my grocer's again and had lost six pounds in twenty-four hours.



## DERRINGER DICK, THE BICYCLIST.

Derringer Dick was a Western man, who  
was always on the shoot,  
He had twenty nicks in his pistol butt,  
each nick for a gone galoot;  
He'd a private graveyard all his own,  
was coroner of Lone Trees,  
And sat in state on the cold defunct, and  
smilingly took the fees.

But Derringer Dick fell on evil days; a  
tenderfoot crowd swarmed in,  
And shootin' at sight didn't go no more.  
He sighed fur the might hev been,  
And he folded his hands, and plined away,  
and longed fur the happy land,  
Where a feller kin do pretty much ez he  
wants, and folks like a man with sand.

One day, ez he sat on his lone front stoop  
a-cleanin' his rusty gun,  
He saw a bicyclist comin' along, a-scorch-  
in' just like fun;

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And Derringer Dick his eyes lit up ez they  
hadn't lit fur years,  
An' he sez "I guess I'll kill some more  
ere I leave this vale of tears."

Then Derringer Dick laid his gun away,  
and bought fur himself a bike.  
He wobbled around in his big corral in  
a way that he didn't like,  
Fur the blame thing bucked and balked,  
and threw poor Dick all over the place;  
But Dick was grit, and he'd mount again,  
with a dogged look on his face.

Now, behold at last, this westerner astride  
of his steed of steel.  
It was a solemn and awful sight to see  
him upon the wheel,  
He didn't wear no bicycle suit, nor put  
on a bit of style,  
But there wasn't a scorcher in the town  
could stand to his pace a mile.

His pants was tucked in his cowhide  
boots, his old red shirt he wore,  
His long grey locks streamed in the wind  
and a huge slouch hat upbore,

*Derringer Dick.*

And ez he wheeled into Bunker street I  
tell you he looked quite pert,  
But his eye had its old time glare that  
meant "some feller will be hurt."

The Editor of the Bugle Horn was the  
first to come his way,  
And Dick he owed him a little grudge  
('twas all Dick would ever pay).  
He caught the editor in the back—Dick's  
gearing was seventy-four—  
And the editor of the Bugle Horn won't  
go to press no more.

It tickled the soul of Derringer Dick as  
he heard the jury say,  
"The editor of the Bugle Horn hadn't  
orter bin in the way."  
Fur that was the selfsame verdict Dick  
had passed on many a cop  
Ez stopped a Derringer bullet when the  
other chap got the drop.

He filed a nick on his sprocket wheel and  
mounted his bike again,  
And that afternoon another foe was re-  
moved from this world of pain.

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So day by day es he scorched along,  
some citizen would be missed,  
And Richard rose into high repute es a  
masterly bicyclist.

Sez Dick to the coroner over their drinks  
when the last inquest was done,  
"Human natur's forever the same.  
Though you've called in the gun,  
Fur lording it high and ruling the roost  
and settling on the spot,  
A bicycle rough is twice ez tough ez the  
chap that hacked and shot.

The code's the same with another name.  
It's just 'git outer my light,  
Don't cross my path, I'm a man of wrath,  
I'll do you up on sight.'  
That's how I felt in the olden time, that's  
how I'll allers feel,  
But a feller don't hev no need fur a  
gun ez long ez he rides a wheel."





















