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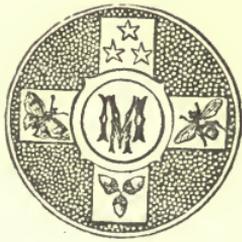
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GONE TO TEXAS



G. T. T.

GONE TO TEXAS

LETTERS

FROM OUR BOYS

EDITED BY

THOMAS HUGHES

New York

MACMILLAN AND CO.

1884

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BY

WILLIAM HUGHES,

GERARD HUGHES,

HENRY HUGHES.

1884

PREFACE.

“Well! Well!! Well!!!” (crescendo) was the long-drawn-out exclamation of a Northern friend of ours, when more than four years ago a younger brother of mine told him that he was just allowing his eldest son, a boy of eighteen, to start alone for Texas, there to seek his fortune. Our friend’s eyes opened wider and wider, and filled with pity not untouched by scorn, as he added—“and you call yourself sane—for an Englishman!”

My brother could only reply by a look of enquiry and an interrogative “Well?”

“G—T—T,” replied our friend, severely emphasising each letter, “stands for Gone to Texas. When we want to say shortly that it’s all up with a fellow, we just say, ‘G. T. T.,’ just as you’d say gone to the devil, or the dogs, over here.”

My brother could only suggest that our friend must be thinking of the “Lone Star” State, in the palmy times of slavery and filibustering, before the Mexican war; but his kindly soul refused to be appeased.

“And then to let the poor boy go in the steerage,” he remonstrated, in a tone of real pity, somewhat modified when he was assured that the “poor

boy" had insisted on taking his own passage and going in the steerage to save his money; being of opinion that as he was deliberately going in for a hard rough life the sooner he began it the better, and that as for the people in the steerage, "they didn't bite."

So my eldest nephew, Willy, sailed for New York in the steerage of a Cunard packet, and on landing went to see our friend Mr. A. Hewitt, M.C. for that city, as he had been told to do. That old and valued friend, struck by his youthful appearance, did all in his power to dissuade him; or at any rate to keep him in New York till there had been time to hear from his cousin, who had been driving cattle in those parts for some years. Master Willy was however too resolutely bent on making his plunge to brook any delay, and so started for the south-west within twenty-four hours. He meant to win off his own bat, and was impatient to be "facing the music."

The opening letter of this volume takes up the story from the day of his landing in America. It will however, I think, make what follows a little clearer, as well as possibly more useful, if I add a few more words of introduction.

Two years before, in consequence of very serious losses, my brother had broken up his establishment, and gone with his three boys into a small four-roomed house in one of the suburbs of London, sending his only daughter (the writer of Part V)

to live with her grandmother. In this tiny lodging they had to do everything for themselves, including cooking; and the boys, on being told frankly that their prospects in life were changed, took to their new surroundings cheerfully, and with zest. All three were then at public schools; the two elder at Marlborough and Cheltenham, the youngest at Westminster, where he was allowed to remain, having good hope of a scholarship, which he gained soon afterwards. The two elder left their schools at once, and, learned professions being now out of the question for them, openings of another kind had to be sought. Willy was taken as his junior clerk by Mr. Allender, the Managing Director of the Aylesbury Dairy Co., in which post he got a thorough grounding and drilling in office and administrative work on a large scale, and a salary of £50 a-year to start with. In this capacity he worked hard and well; his salary was twice raised in the eighteen months of his service. During that time he kept his own counsel; never spent a penny more than he could help; and by the end of it had saved £130. Then, after consulting his father, he sent in his resignation, having obtained leave to carry out the purpose he had quietly formed, of going out to the West to seek his fortune.

I must own myself to having done what I could to dissuade him, as I found that his employer was thoroughly satisfied with, and sorry to lose him;

and that in another year or so he would be in receipt of a salary of £250, with good prospects of further promotion. However I quite changed my mind on finding how resolutely he had been looking forward to, and preparing for, a pioneer's life. He asked for no assistance, indeed declined what I could offer him, having determined to make his own small savings sufficient to start upon. He had no illusions whatever about the life he had chosen; knew perfectly well that he would have to live under harder conditions in many respects than a farm-labourer or navvy in England; and that it might be years before these conditions would be materially altered. But his mind was made up that the game was worth the candle, that he could trust himself to go through with his experiment and to play it fairly out in any case. He was confident however that he would have a good ranche of his own by the time he was of age.

How far his self-confidence was justified, and his ambition realised, readers will judge for themselves. After taking a short holiday at home to see friends and relatives, he sailed in Sept. 1878; and Part I of this volume starts with his first letter to his father, to whom also all the following letters in this part are addressed. They chronicle his first doings and impressions.

By the end of six months he had made a tour with a sheep-man, to whom he hired himself, across the Rio Grande and in Southern Texas; had

visited a number of ranches, and learnt, in his own opinion and words, "everything almost—ploughing and harrowing and all the rest of it." Part II tells how he made his first investment in land, and imported some English sheep, in the resolve to teach the natives how to do their business better in the future. A longer experience, and contact with the hard facts of bush and prairie farming, somewhat modified these views, and taught him that six months' training does not tell for a great deal in the tough wrestle with old mother earth. However, he made light of the falls she gave him, scarcely indeed allowed his friends at home to know that he had had a fall at all, and within a year had got a farm of his own, a one-roomed shanty with a lean-to to live in, and gear enough of one kind or another to keep him going and give hope for the future.

In 1879 his youngest brother Harry, called familiarly the Doctor from his taste for natural science, joined him, throwing up his Westminster scholarship. This sacrifice involved an entire change of plans and prospects, but it again was deliberately made, and has not been repented. The long hours of work by gaslight in Dean's Yard had begun to tell on his eyesight, so he visited Willy on the ranche, and there found his eyes rapidly improving. This decided him, and he stayed with his brother. His eyes have now become quite strong, and the use their owner is making of them may be gathered from his letters.

It was not till some two years later that Gerard, familiarly known as Chico, made up his mind to cast in his lot with his elder and younger brother. For some three years he had been working in the studio of Mr. G. Watts, R.A., an old family friend, who with rare kindness had taken him as a pupil without fee or premium, and devoted much time to teaching him. I may not be an impartial judge, but his work latterly seemed to me to show considerable promise, an opinion shared I believe by his kind instructor. So he too went off to Texas, as may be read in Part VI of this book, and is now in partnership with Willy and the Doctor, and quite content with his prospects.

For some years yet the brothers will have "to put in all their time" on the ranche, at shearing and herding, clearing and planting; but neither of them has the least idea of giving up his old tastes and pursuits in the long run. They have already got their books out of the packing-cases, and in odds and ends of time, Willy is faithful to his fiddle, Chico to his pencil, brushes, and palette, and the Doctor to his science and photography. They believe that whatever is really essential to the life of a cultivated gentleman may be had in due time on a Texas farm, and is quite consistent with hard labour and rough fare.

I think I am bound to add that neither of them had the least idea until within the last few months that their letters home were ever likely to get into

print. Indeed, when the proposal was made to them, it was not without considerable reluctance on their part that their consent was obtained. I am glad that it has been, as I believe that this little book may be of great use at the present time to a number of young Englishmen ; very possibly to some of their own old school-fellows. For every year it becomes more clear that the openings in England for young men in our upper and middle classes are quite insufficient. The learned professions, the Army and Navy, and the Civil Service are besieged by candidates, of whom there are a dozen for every vacancy. It is the same with every branch of trade and commerce, in which moreover the intense competition has brought about a condition of things which must, I should think, make any parent, or otherwise responsible person, pause before allowing a boy to take his chance of making an honest living in them.

The pressure of this state of things has been driving numbers of our boys to the Colonies and America for some years past, and must do so more and more in those which are coming. It would be well I think if the nation took the matter in hand, and treated colonisation scientifically with a view to making the most of our splendid material. There can be no doubt that, with a very moderate amount of care and foresight, such an effort would pay its own way almost at once, and its influence on the future of England—the new feeling of loyalty to

the old country which would spring up all round the world—would be of inestimable value. But in the present state of parties and of Parliament it is out of the question, and so long as the great work is left to drift on, and get itself done as best it can, there can be no more useful help to it than to furnish trustworthy details of the life which young emigrants will have to lead in the first years of their experiment.

And nothing is more difficult to get than such trustworthy details. There is indeed scarcely a British colony, or a State of the Union, which has not an agency in this country, engaged in distributing the most glowing accounts of the unrivalled riches, above ground and beneath, which are waiting to be picked up in their respective territories. And I am far from saying that many of the documents so circulated are not carefully prepared and their contents to a great extent justified by the facts. But they are not what is needed. Not one of them that ever I saw tells a youngster how he will be housed and fed, what wages he may hope to earn, what sort of company he will be thrown amongst.

And this is precisely what the boys' letters will do. They may be left to the study of their contemporaries at home, with this warning however to young readers. The hopeful and cheery spirit which runs through them may to some extent divert the attention of such persons from the hard facts. These, however, are there plainly enough ;

and foremost amongst them this one stands out, that the life must be one of very severe physical labour for years, amidst surroundings which will try their mettle to the utmost. To those who will accept these surroundings, and face them in the same hopeful and cheery spirit, one may say without fear, Follow their lead. But if any one has reason to doubt himself on this point—if he has yearnings after the fleshpots in the midst of which he has grown up, and is only induced to leave them because he sees no hope at home of getting an adequate supply—let him by all means stop where he is. The backwoods and prairies are no place for him ; and he will only bring discredit on himself and his country by adding one more to the long roll of young Englishmen who drift away to the gambling and drinking saloons, which unhappily are to be found in abundance on the outskirts of civilisation in every new country under the sun.

T. HUGHES.

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PART I.

THE PIONEER'S LETTERS.



PROSPECTING IN

TEXAS AND MEXICO.

“When all the world is young, lads,
And all the trees are green,
With every goose a swan, lads,
And every lass a queen,
Then, Hey for boot and horse! lads,
And round the world away,
Young blood will have its course, lads,
And every dog his day.”

Chas. Kingsley.



THE START.

Sweeny's Hotel, New York,

Sunday, Sept. 15, 1878.

PART I.
prospecting.

HERE I am at last, and have just been pitching Sept. 1878
into bacon and eggs, and stewed tomatoes, and Jan. 1879.
coffee and iced water. We had a splendid passage;
they say it was the quickest the "Erin" has had.
We got into dock at about 2 o'clock, and after the
saloon passengers had gone off we were barged
down to Castle Garden. What a farce the over-
hauling by U. S. Customs is. Whether because it
is Sunday or not I don't know, but they just
opened a few things, and put a very large signature
on in chalk, and hurried you on. I was hardly sick
at all, and enjoyed the voyage immensely, especially
the awfully barbaric manner in which we were fed!
Very few had plates; they used the table (or board
with high edges which rejoiced in that name), and
as for spoons—never heard of them, "Weren't
hands good enough!" Half the steerage were

PART I. Irish, the rest all sorts of nations. Some of the Sept. 1878
Prospecting. Irish *could* eat. A quart of soup, a quart and a to
Jan. 1879.
half of potatoes, about 4 lbs. of meat, and a gallon
of "plum duff" (or pudding) was what some of
them seemed to stow. And at tea it was very
interesting to watch them. I made a special study
of one last night. He was the happy possessor of
a soup plate and large cup, both of which he filled
to overflowing with tea, and then divided his butter
into two (they give you about half-a-pound) and put
one lot in the cup, the other in the plate, and then
divided his bread between them, and mopped it up
with a spoon. What a place this is! Nothing but
the jingling of car-bells to be heard. I was very
much struck with the white steamers on the river
with the working contrivance at top. I could see
ten all at once, scudding about between New York
and Jersey City. They guide awfully well. I
cannot say what I am intending to do as yet. I
have read those papers you gave me through, and
fancy sheep-ranching, which they say is most profit-
able, and which I know a lot of young English
fellows have gone in for, will be what I shall strike
at. At all events, whatever it is, I know you can
trust me to put my best foot foremost, and I will
write as soon as I have anything to say. I met

PART I. an old mountain fellow on board. He comes from Sept. 1878
 prospecting. Utah, where, I believe, he gardens fruit, but he was ^{to} Jan. 1879.
 very close on all subjects. He was very quaint. He had been visiting England for a few weeks, and so, as he had not seen his brother for twenty-three years, "just looked in for half-an-hour," as he told me. He explained all about "homesteading" and "preempting," &c. He became a citizen of the U. S., but is an Englishman by birth. I asked him if it were profitable to recant after becoming a citizen? So he says, "Well, it's just this-wise; when ye've once become a 'Merican citizen ye'll never want to go back again—No, *Sir!*" He says England is too "overcrowded for him, Yes, *Sir!*" He was a dumpy and broad little man, with a sort of wideawake twice as broad as himself, and always had his hands in his pockets and his legs apart. I expect my next move will be to San Francisco, from whence I shall "look round."

Philadelphia Station,

Thursday, Sept. 19, 1878.

I seem to be blest with a very small share of difficulties, and if any block does occur it worries me to discuss it with any one, as it has always

PART I. been an intense pleasure to me to do everything Sept. 1878
 Prospecting. for myself without help. . . . Mr. Hewitt was very ^{to} Jan. 1879
 kind. I had quite a fight to get away, and I
 expect he thought I was too young to go by
 myself, and wanted me to go into the country with
 him till he could hear where Jem was, which I
 suppose would have taken a month or so. My
 train starts in twenty-five minutes, so I am off to
 get some tea and my bag checked.

Central Hotel, San Antonio,
 Sept. 27, 1878.

Here I am at last, after an awfully hot dusty journey from New York. I stayed a little time in Philadelphia, and am glad I did so. They are building some new public buildings there, which are, I suppose, to answer much the same purpose as our Law Courts. They are very fine. It is a tremendous block with a huge court in the middle, and is built of polished Scotch marble; and going into the court quite takes away your breath, it is so cool. The Quarantine officers were awfully strict all the way; each large town sent out its officer to make every one sign and swear they had not been in any yellow fever district since July 20th.

PART I. They turned out three men at Waller, a small Sept. 1878
Prospecting. place between Hempstead and Houston. I have to Jan. 1879.

since seen two of them, and they say they let them come on after airing their heels on the platform for twelve hours. I got a health certificate at St. Louis without trouble, but every town after satisfied its conscience by making me sign as well; sometimes at night, when I was in the middle of a—well, as sound a sleep as you can get with your head and body in a lump and your legs somewhere over the back of another seat. We passed some very amusing “cities,” Log City, and Lairetta City. They were both in the middle of the prairie, and all the city was a small pile of logs thrown on the ground, and a sign-board with the name of the city on it; not a house, or an animal, or a human being anywhere within ten miles! I went to Mr. L——’s yesterday. He knows Jem intimately, and has given me the run of his rooms, and I have been introduced to a Capt. T——, an Englishman with a large ranche, and am going to be introduced to another man to-morrow. Jem is driving cattle north, and is not expected back here for some weeks. It has been awfully hot here lately. Yesterday it was ninety in a “cool” room. I am in excellent health and spirits, and do not feel the

PART I. heat so much as I did in Spain. The chief amuse- Sept. 1878
 Prospecting. ment here seems to be getting up party squabbles Jan. 1879.
 of every and any kind, and they say in the papers
 "A rare good time may be expected," which
 means there will probably be plenty of row. They
 never seem to think of the business part of the
 concern. . . . One of the things the Yankees do
 well is boot-making; they *do* make comfortable
 boots and walking-shoes. Mr. L—— is going to
 show me a place on the river where I may get a
 swim. He is very jolly and amusing. He says he
 riles old Jem by making fun of the English and
 their way of speaking. Jem is very popular here,
 every one in the town knows him.

A Brushwood Prairie,
 2 miles from San Antonio,
 Oct. 4, 1878.

Here I am, camping out with a lot of sheep. The brother of the landlord of my hotel introduced me to a man named W——, who has been sheep-raising and selling for ten years, and has just made enough to live on comfortably. I think we shall work together very well. There are a few men in the sheep business who have a *name*, and sell their sheep at \$5 to \$15; whereas men

PART I. like W—— get only \$1 to \$2½, and they say, Sept. 1878
 Prospecting. “Oh, it’s just this a way y’know, *they* get a name, Jan. 1879.
 and then they get big prices, that’s where it is!”
 They casually admit that they (the big men) had
 some good rams from somewhere and improved
 their stock; but they utterly fail to see the con-
 nection between this and the “name” they “get.”
 For next season we are going to have a couple
 of rams out from England and just “fix” that
 missing link. Will you get all possible particulars
 for me as to shipping them in London, freight, &c.;
 and let me know whether they can be shipped to
 Galveston or Corpus Christi direct (I shall prob-
 ably not be able to get to either place to find
 out for some time, and no one knows anything
 about anything a yard away from him in this
 part of the country).

We came out here the day before yesterday.
 W—— took me to the yard where his “buggy” was.
 It is the oddest old rattletrap I ever saw, and he
 ties a horse and a mule in. They are not nearly
 the same size or colour. All the harness is made
 up of old bits of strap and rope, and I don’t think
 any one could “fix” the horses but himself. He
 throws all the harness down by the buggy, and
 if a buckle or anything gets lost it don’t scare

PART I. him; he says, "Oh, never mind, guess I'll fix it Sept. 1878
 Prospecting. somehows." Well, sir, we started off in this thing Jan. 1879.
 right for this place as the crow flies. This is a
 large prairie overgrown with tall prickly bushes,
 and W——, whose ranche is 100 miles away South,
 has brought a few thousand sheep here to sell to
 the people of San Antonio. If that buggy's wheels
 were only a yard or two nearer its body it would
 be better. As it is, they get away amongst the
 bushes; you suddenly feel a heave, and see the
 two on the left side riding over the top of a bush;
 you cling on to the rail for life, down comes that
 side, and the other (a plucky pair they are) sees
 if he can't away higher than the first. And then
 you find half the harness has unhitched itself
 from the crooked nails and things. I have now
 been out here two nights, and like it very much.
 We shall start for his ranche as soon as all the
 sheep are sold, which may be a day or a week.
 I am not going to take any wages, but then he
 keeps me and feeds me and teaches me, and I
 leave when I like, and of course the rams (which
 we shall want about next April) will come out at
 his expense. The first night we had a run. The
 moon went down about 11 o'clock, and at 11.30
 the flock had started off on the rampage towards

PART I. a Mexican flock a mile off, and we were afraid they Sept. 1878
 Prospecting. would get mixed, so we had a run to round them to
Jan. 1879.
 up and get them back before they reached the
 others. The next morning the Mexican came over
 to breakfast and lassoed a kid, which thirty seconds
 afterwards was airing six component parts on trees,
 and a seventh in a stew-pot on the fire, and we set
 to. We have black coffee, and onions, and bread,
 which we bake ourselves, and potatoes and bacon.
 W—— works himself, so I expect to learn lots under
 him. Sheep-men here are, for the most part, of
 two kinds: the men like W——, who work, and who
 never make any improvements, and men who
 seldom see their ranche and have herders; and
 they could make improvements if they were only
 to attend to it themselves. The men who make
 it pay are the ones who combine the two kinds—
 so I guess we look like cutting up smart, anyways
 we'll try. It is awfully hot still. I have a bathe
 in a creek just here, and am rigged out à la herd-
 boy. My coat and pants, which are briar and
 water proof, light, and cool, and look like brown silk,
 cost \$3½ together! and hat, with two-mile brim, \$1.
 One ought to come with *nothing* and get rigged
 out here: they know better what is needed, and
 one gets just the things one wants. I am awfully

PART I. well. I expect I shall work with W—— some- Sept. 1878
Prospecting. where under two years; then I'll get across to Jan. 1879.
to

England and get a few rams and come back and run second to none, or turn toes up. Of course I am reckoning that I don't get leaded by any of these shot which (they say) occasionally get about so thick you can't see the sun. Our camp here consists of the buggy and pair aforesaid, W——'s boy, a bright lad of twelve, three camp water-barrels, three stew-pans, which act as ovens, &c., &c., a few blankets, and a few odds and ends, viz. a knife and fork or two, and tin boxes of salt and sugar.

P.S. We shall want the rams about the end of March, and they will have to come to New York. We should like to know freight. I shall write to Allender asking prices of rams, and telling him I want him to get one of his farmer friends to pick us two next Spring. And if you can get us freight particulars now, I will get you to start them from London for us when we want them.

Brushwood Prairie,

Oct. 10, 1878.

I expect English rams will cost too much for W—— by the time they get here, so I shan't bother Allender in the matter until I want mine.

PART I. You might get the price of a good one for me, Sept. 1878
 Prospecting. that I may tell W——. I haven't any idea. I ^{to} Jan. 1879.
 suppose though they would come to £25, or more.
 W——'s boy was taken very feverish a day or two ago, and I have been taking the flock out. There are 1500, and when out feeding they cover half-a-mile diameter, and they always go on walking, and by the time you get to the head the tail will have twiddled round and started. They licked me at first, but I can manage them now. We had a storm the night before last. It was lightning half way round the horizon, and then blew up in a few minutes and just let us have it. I fixed up under the wagon. The animals started in the middle of it, and then it was a case of mackintosh and top-boots! Some of the ewes are dropping lambs, and it's fine to see those kids trying to get through long grass when they are half-an-hour old. They jump, and spike themselves, and fall on their noses, and repeat the process until they are dog-gone tired, as W—— would say. I think his expression is a corruption of something worse. We get up about 5 o'clock and have breakfast, then the sheep start at 7 and are out till 12, then dinner; then start at 1.30 and in at 5.30; tea at 6, and "in bed" by 7.30, when W——

PART I. and I talk; and he tells me about the time they Sept. 1878
Prospecting. were "fighting and hoorawing and fussing about Jan. 1879.

here," meaning the war between North and South. We are very good cooks, and our greatest variation is in our bread, which we cook in different ways. It was awfully good this morning—a liquid batter of flour and water and yeast and salt, and a few eggs, then set some oil boiling in a skillet and pour the batter in in doses. It makes a sort of crisp soufflé cake. You fry about four at the same time in a skillet eight inches across, fish them out in about two minutes and pour four more in. They are light and wholesome. I ate about 200 or 250 I should say, that's about half a cwt. I am now a mile away from camp looking after these sheep, and only started this letter to say that I wanted you to get me the price of good rams somewhere about, as I shan't bother Allender at all in the matter.

San Antonio,

Oct. 24, 1878.

We have not left here yet you see, but W—— has sold his sheep, and we expect to start for his ranche to-morrow. I think the open air suits me to a T. We slept in a room in town last night, and it seemed stuffy after sleeping out on the ground, so

PART I. we camp out again to-night. The night I took Sept. 1878
Prospecting. your last letter to post I had a supper, after nine ^{to} Jan. 1879.
days bacon and flour and kid, and you bet I let
in! They give you at all the "un-napkin" places
here a grand meal for 25 cents, about six dishes.
One never gets through them except under special
circumstances, but I got through all mine that
night, and two cups of coffee. I had a steak and
two sorts of vegetables, and two poached eggs and
a dish of stew, and another of mutton and some
stewed prunes, and any amount of bread and
butter! I had a fortnight's herding, and have
mastered that and learnt a good deal about sheep.
I employed my spare time in tarantulizing taran-
tula spiders out of their holes, and throwing stones
at rabbits. I was almost going with the three
fellows who bought the sheep. They were going
to Fort Worth, 200 miles, and neither knew how
to drive properly, so they wanted me to help them;
but they wouldn't give me my fee of 5 dollars
per week besides grub, so I refused. You people
don't know what coffee is over there. We buy it
in the green, and roast and grind it ourselves, and
then *boil* the powder, which is ground about three
times as coarsely as we used to grind it, so it all
settles to the bottom of the pot and doesn't come

PART I. off when you pour out the liquid, which is partly Sept. 1878
 Prospecting. because the spout, or lip rather, is at the top of the ^{to} Jan. 1879.
 pot. I think I see my way to starting a good thing next spring. I find that the Northern sheepmen all come South to buy. The central market is San Antonio, and the Southern breeders bring their cattle there, and the Northerners (as those three we sold to) come there to buy. One of the three told me that some of the sheep they had just paid 1 dollar 25 cents for were worth 2 dollars 50 cents up North; and next spring I think I shall drive North with a few sheep, if I feel capable. Please get my cash transferred to L——'s here, as I feel I can trust myself with some capital by the time that is transferred. I am in no hurry though.

P.S.—We start at sunrise to-morrow, so I shan't see Jem till we return with sheep in a few weeks. Don't think I want any more than that money of mine—I couldn't do with any more.

Concepcion, Texas,
 Nov. 8, 1878.

I have had tremendous fun since I wrote to you on 24th Oct. W—— and his boy, and the Mexican herder and myself, started next morning at sunrise for his ranche, 120 miles South, W——

PART I. and I leading in two-horse wagon with spare Sept. 1878
 Prospecting. horse tied behind, and the nigger and boy in ^{to} Jan. 1879.
 buggy and pair with two horses tied behind. It was tremendously hot all the way. We did it in three days, the last day starting at 1.30 a.m. and getting in at 6 p.m. The first day the wagon nearly upset into a deep gully as we were going down one of the perpendicular creeks, of which we crossed thirty or so. Perhaps you know them—dry watercourses about twenty feet deep; you go straight down and then straight up. We rushed down, W—— putting on the break hard and throwing the reins into my lap, and the left horse almost went down the creek on the left. The second day one of the horses behind the buggy kicked the other, which one bolted behind a tree, and as it was tied somewhere under the buggy it shot the hind part up, and out went the boy, who was driving, on to the mule's back; the reins dropped, and the horse and mule started off, taking the buggy over the legs and chest of the boy. (He wasn't hurt.) W—— and I heard the Mexican yelling behind, about 300 yards off, and we saw the buggy dash up in a cloud of dust, and it didn't stop till the pole had applied itself to the horse behind the wagon and sent it swinging to

PART I. the side. No damage was done. After this the Sept. 1878
 Prospecting. Mexican funk'd and took to his horse, and I got ^{to} Jan. 1879.
 into the buggy with the boy to help him. It is
 the rottenest old buggy you ever saw. W——
 bought it second-hand and has had it five years,
 and has done the "repairing" himself, so you
 can imagine the result. It is *all* mendings, espe-
 cially as to the harness; and coming down we had
 to tie the tires on in several places with strips of
 goat-hide. All the wheels were rattling, and the
 left one was—well, "rolling"; and, as I was just
 beside it, I watched it with great interest as we
 went down the gullies or through ruts a foot deep.
 How it held together I don't know. The worst
 gully was an awful one, nearly perpendicular.
 The horse, although used to gullies, funk'd it,
 and reared; so the Mexican went to the head
 of the animals and pulled them. When a few
 yards down it was too much for him, and he
 sprang aside, and down we dashed and up the
 other side safely. I was driving, as the boy, like
 the horse, had funk'd, and got out at the top.
 For miles and miles we went through burnt and
 burning grass. It doesn't flare, but smoulders;
 and we passed trees that were still flickering in
 places. One night in a forest we could see it

PART I.
Prospecting.

smoking out west of us, and the wind was blowing Sept. 1878
our way, but it didn't reach us. On the second Jan. 1879.
day, in the evening, we passed a wagon by the
roadside with two small girls in it, about six
years old. It had camped there the night before
and the horses had stampeded, and the father of
the children had been out since daybreak after
them, and had not returned. We asked them
if they were frightened; "Oh, no," they said.
"Have you any water?" (they were four miles
from any.) "No." "Then what will you do for
it?" "Starve, I guess," said the eldest; as much
as to say, You ought to know that. Their father
now came up after a fruitless search all day. His
boots had been burnt up by the sun, and the soles
were tied on with string. We left them water,
and promised to send the horses back if we found
them; but we didn't see them. W——'s house
is a log hut, with bedroom, and kitchen, and out-
houses; one for children, of which there are nine,
and others for corn, &c. The first night it rained
hard, and I slept in his room, he and his wife
in one bed, and I in the other. I wanted to sleep
on the floor, but, as he remarked, "the floor gets
covered with water sometimes." The floor, I may
mention, is the earth, and, instead of being raised,

PART I. is rather lower than outside, from being trodden Sept. 1878
 Prospecting. on. We were at his ranche for three days, and to Jan. 1879.
 then he and I went on in the wagon to a friend's ranche, to sleep there. The ranche used to belong to two young Americans, who were murdered by their "pastores" for plunder. Next day the rest of the sheep-buying party came up (we are down South, buying sheep to drive to San Antonio) in an ambulance belonging to Mr. X—, one of the party. We consist of Mr. X—, who was educated at Yale, is stout and merry; Judge Y—, who sings comic songs or tells comic stories all day, and prefers dabbling in sheep to lawyering; Z—, a young Northerner, who is in Texas for pleasure, is pretty rich, I fancy, and has come out with them for a lark; and W—, myself, and the Mexican. We started at once for X—'s ranche, the luggage and four of us in the ambulance, and two on horseback; stayed there for a day or two, and then started on down here. They are very great on card-playing and whiskey-drinking, and play poker at every stoppage, and at night, by the light of the moon, till 11 o'clock or so. They don't gamble, but bet imaginary sums, and owe each other thousands of dollars. We were two and a half days coming down here,

PART I. and stopped at a small town named Collins for Sept. 1878
 Prospecting. stores, and laid in lamp-oil, flour and potatoes, ^{to} Jan. 1879.
 bacon, whiskey, &c. Coming along the oil got
 into the flour and potatoes, and the whiskey got
 into "the crowd." It is not lawful to sell whiskey
 down here, but it is bottled under the name of
 "Stomach bitters," and sold in a square glass bottle
 with directions, about "two table spoonfuls, &c."
 After every drink they get very talkative, and,
 as each is a perfect character without it, it is in-
 tensely interesting to listen to them. The nigger
 pretends not to like it, but says a little makes
 him "mucho bravo"; so it is as well that he takes
 some, as it is a pretty rough country down here,
 and we all carry arms (about twelve in number)
 loaded, and by our sides at night. We are now
 camping just outside Concepcion, a small Mexican
 town. W—— and the nigger are out after some
 goats which the former lent a man on shares three
 years ago, and has not taken the trouble to look
 after (no wonder he doesn't get rich!); and the
 other three buying sheep in the wagon; and I am
 looking after camp, with the things scattered round
 and my coat hanging beside me with a loaded
 revolver sticking out of the pocket—one feels safer
 with one, though it is very seldom required—and

PART I. for half-an-hour before I began writing I had been Sept. 1878
Prospecting. preparing a larded kidney for my dinner, and it Jan. 1879.

is now roasting over some wood coals and tied up in grass and looks awfully good. Just after passing Collins, Z——, who was riding (and had had some whiskey), let his six-shooter off by mistake, and it kicked into his face and cut him. He comes in for the wars whether tight or sober. Coming from San Antonio in the ambulance, with X—— and the judge, they stuck in a bog (W—— and I nearly stuck in the same place when we came down), and Z—— being, well, the soberest of the party, had to get out, and, up to his waist in mud, unhitch the horses and hitch them to the back of the wagon, and so pull it out again.

9th Nov. Just off in ambulance for a drive over country after sheep.

Concepcion,
Nov. 19, 1878.

Since I wrote to you we have been a week's trip after sheep. We camped seventeen miles from here or more, near a very large waterhole (they are very scarce here), and we were a mile or two from any ranche. That was our camp, and from there we scouted for sheep. We had lots of shooting at antelope and deer, and wild turkeys, geese, cranes,

PART I. ducks, partridges, &c. We have not bagged any Sept. 1878

Prospecting.

venison yet. Though I have only had five shots, ^{to} Jan. 1879.

the first I got a bird, and the second and third rabbits; so I thought I was infallible I suppose, as I shot the last two carelessly and missed. They were both at a lot of curlews sitting by a pond. From our camp by the waterhole, we all, except the Mexican, whom we left in camp, went after sheep, two of us riding and the other three in the ambulance. We didn't take any food, or cooking tricks as they call them, as one expects to be fed gratis at the few ranches one comes to with one's presence, even though there are five mouths to feed. The first of the two days we had dinner at a very clean little ranche off *café au lait* and batter cakes. That night we got to a wealthy stock-owner, whose "hall of reception" was a round space cut out of a thicket. We didn't do any business with him, but nevertheless, as usual, ate about a whole goat of his, and made free with his corn-meal. Next morning we had a light breakfast of coffee and corn-bread, and started for camp, getting a *little* corn-bread and coffee in the middle of the day at a ranche (the ranches are sometimes five or six miles apart or more), and when we got back that evening we were ravenous, and had a

PART I. large supper off goat and bread and molasses and Sept. 1878
 Prospecting. bacon and coffee—this is our larder in full; and Jan. 1879.
 then we started back here next day, stopping that
 night at a large horse ranche, where we invaded
 the house, and slept in one of the rooms, and
 monopolised a detached kitchen. We saw Mexi-
 cans breaking in horses, and also cutting off the
 manes and tails of some wild ones. They drive
 them into a corral, and then lasso them, and tie
 their legs together after tripping them. The old
 stud horse gave them some trouble, but they at
 last lassoed his front legs as he was galloping
 round, which sent him on to his nose, and then of
 course they were on to him with ropes. When he
 got up he just was mad to find he was cropped.
 We are now on our old camp ground here, and
 haven't got any sheep yet. It is splendid weather,
 and as I write (on the inside of the back of the
 ambulance) there is not a cloud to be seen, and
 it is as hot as a *hot* summer day over there; and it
 is cooler now than it was when we left, as there
 have been two nights of rain which has filled the
 creeks which were dry before. I fancy these
 fellows don't mean much business, but I am learn-
 ing a lot about stock and the country, and am
 having a very jolly time. I have no work to do

PART I. Sept. 1878
Prospecting. attends to the horses, &c., and the grub is very Jan. 1879.
good for camp, and there's lots of it. Oh, yes! by the bye, my special work is baker's. I can bake better than any of the others, and make better bread. You bet we have good flour bread—little rolls about as big as a hen's egg, and we have them hot for breakfast and cold the rest of the day. I have just hit the dodge for making them *au fait*, or whatever it is. The man who keeps the store here had confidence enough to sell them a bottle of gin this morning, and a quarter of an hour after it appeared in camp those four and the Mexican had emptied the bottle. At this moment the only one who is overcome is the Judge, and he is asleep by the wagon; the other three are playing poker as usual. I am picking up Mexican fast; every one as far south as this speaks it, and there are very few Americans here; I don't think we have come across *one* since we left W——'s ranche, and only two Mexicans who have been able to talk English; but the three bosses of our party all speak Mexican.

It is extraordinary the difference between English and the people down here in small expenses. Our Mexican servant invites any of his friends to

PART I. eat with him at his master's expense, and no one Sept. 1878
Prospecting. says anything, and when we were camping near the Jan. 1879.

waterhole, two Mexican herders came twice every day nearly for food, and just took what they wanted without being invited. But it is the regular thing out here to eat at any one else's expense, and consider it a piece of condescension.

I have gained about 20 lbs. in weight, I believe, since I left England, and am in excellent health.

The ranches, or farms, down here are several miles apart, some of the owners owning as much as 180,000 acres; this is the case with one or two, the rest a paltry 500 or upwards! Some ranches own, besides other stock, 2000 or more horses, which roam about the country in herds.

The people about here live very simply; the richest have only wooden houses, and eat goat or mutton (very seldom beef), and although plenty of game can be had for the shooting, they very seldom take the trouble to kill it. There are quantities of wild turkey in the woods; they run about in flocks, and are so common that if a man shoots one he generally cooks the breast and throws away the rest.

Laredo, Rio Grande,

Dec. 2, 1878.

PART I.
Prospecting.

The day after I last wrote we bought 600 sheep, Sept. 1878 driving them into a large pen, and then catching ^{to} Jan. 1879. each one and looking at his teeth, and branding him with a square tar mark, and chopping his tail off, and putting him through the gap. I was catching and bringing to the gap nearly all the time, and it is tremendous exercise, as some of the sheep are pretty strong. Next day we met a buyer, who wanted sheep in a hurry, and so took ours and paid us what we gave (or rather what X—, W—, and Y— gave), and \$100 besides, which was a very good day's work. We are now on the American side of Laredo, which is on both sides of the river, and are going to start into Mexico to-day or to-morrow, as sheep are very much cheaper there; and not only that, Mexican money is at a discount of 15%, so that a Mexican dollar, which is at par in Mexico, can be bought in America for 85 cents. We brought a box full (two or three thousand I expect) of Mexican dollars with us safely. We passed some splendid scenery occasionally. Most of the way is quite flat, but two days we came upon hills

PART I. covered with all sorts of thorny bushes, cacti, etc. Sept. 1878
Prospecting. The scenery for the last five or six miles or more ^{to} Jan. 1879.

was lovely. A very hard north wind was blowing, and as we passed the mouths of Canyons we nearly got blown over, and had to put up the ambulance cover. This is a very pretty little town; it has sprung up within the last thirty years or so; there are the inevitable Mexican plazas, and a very well built church, and the houses are well built and painted in all sorts of brilliant designs outside—I am speaking of this side of the river, as I haven't been across yet; the other side seems to be as large. The river here is as broad as the Thames at London Bridge, but shallow; no navigation comes up as far as this, and the town is built on a sandy kind of soil and about 20 feet higher than the river, which is gradually working the sand away. We are having beautiful weather, very warm; I don't think there is a cloud on the sky at this moment. Yesterday we washed in the Rio in the morning, and in the afternoon I went for a stroll along the shore and saw evening parade at the barracks; and when returning saw a blaze in town. It was a large store on fire, and when I got there the church bells were being hammered, and Mexicans were

PART I. rushing along the balcony of the first floor getting Sept. 1878
 Prospecting. the furniture out. There is no fire-engine in the ^{to} Jan. 1879.
 place, and we pulled buckets of water up by ropes on to the balcony at the back, and handed them up through a trap-door on to the roof, and got the fire out in about an hour after it began. The only serious damage done to the things was from the water, and crazy Mexicans who pulled down any woodwork they could; and after the fire was out there was still one crazy loon trying vainly to hack the wooden tiles off the roof with an axe. We have been living like fighting-cocks, on beef and onions, and pickles, and oranges, besides the usual bacon and molasses, &c., and have hired a two-room house with a yard to it. We inhabit the former, and the five horses the latter. The atmosphere is so clear here in the country that, when six miles from Concepcion, we could hear the drum beating between the gusts of wind (which was blowing towards the town). Of course letters are not being forwarded to me from San Antonia, so do not expect to get answers to any that may be there, till I strike it again.

Laredo, Texas,

Dec. 15, 1878.

PART I.
Prospecting.

Since I wrote last we have been ninety miles ^{Sept. 1878} into Mexico and back. We had a good deal of ^{to} Jan. 1879. trouble getting a start, as none of the officials on the Mexican side seem to have any definite ideas with regard to the laws, and each one fingers around for a bribe instead of slapping out the law. We got across the river, wagon and horses, &c., on a barge, and, after making satisfactory arrangements with the officials in town, started; on the outside we were pulled up by another custom-house and taken back; "satisfactory arrangements" had to be gone through again, and a pass given us. We then rolled out, and on the third day reached Lampazos, which is a small town amongst mountains; the latter were plainly visible from the Rio Grande. Going down we passed only about three ranches, and crossed a very pretty river (the Salado). All the Mexicans were very pleasant and hospitable. Going down we slept near a ranch each night. When we got into Lampazos we waited in the main plaza while the boss looked out for a house. The annual examination was just taking place; a seedy band was playing outside the schoolroom door, and some 150 or 200

PART I. girls marched in, in white dresses and red sashes, Sept. 1878
 Prospecting, and then a few anxious parents marched in, as if ^{to} Jan. 1879.
 they were taking each other down to dinner, and
 all dressed up to the nines. We got a very jolly
 house, or stone-room, for storing wool or fodder;
 it was empty though, and outside was a yard with
 a small stream running through it: the river is
 tapped, and runs through nearly every yard in town.
 That night I had a bathe in it, while the others
 went with a party of cattle-men to see a per-
 formance by a strolling company of actors. We
 stopped in Lampazos about a week, and I think
 the other four cattle-men and ourselves were the
 only whites in town. One of the others was an
 exact specimen of a Mark Twain hero; he had
 mined of course, and was a lump of wit and good
 humour. Some one asked him how much he had
 paid to go into the theatre. "Pay!" said he,
 "paid nothing. Our pistols were locked up, but
 I got hold of one and strapped it over my behind,
 and me and Johnson just walked through." The
 Mexicans are very funky of Americans if they
 have a pistol with them, and it's very seldom they
 haven't, and it was a very small piece of French
 leave. The other four had been out after cattle
 (half the time or more on the spree) for six months,

PART I. and they were getting irregular about their meals, Sept. 1878
 Prospecting. got anything to eat anywhere, and they used to Jan. 1879.

take us by storm and eat like giants. It is part of the fun to go and eat at another ranche's expense, and ask why the — there isn't a better lay out in such a bully-looking crowd?

I had a tremendous walk one day. Lampazos is between two mountains. The one on the right looks as if it is about three miles, or not so much, away; the other one is nearer; so I thought I'd walk to the furthest one. I started at 9 o'clock a.m. to walk, and walked across the prairie, and now and then the foot of the mountain would seem a mile off; but when I got there I found myself on the top of a small hill, with another mile of prairie, and so on; but I didn't stop, as I was going through cacti of all kinds, and various plants I had never seen before. At last, about 3 o'clock in the afternoon, I reached the foot of the mountain and went half-way up. I had a splendid view of an endless stretch of prairie, and away in the horizon one could see a stretch of about ten miles of prairie fire, which smoulders and flares along (this one burned for days); but the sun was rapidly going down, and I thought the sooner I got back the better, especially as I had to cross a river a mile

PART I. or two from town. So I started back as quickly Sept. 1878
Prospecting. as I could. The last half mile was so thick with Jan. 1879.
cactus I could hardly get along, and when I was
at last started pretty well the sun was disappearing.
Luckily it was a full moon that night, or I should
have had to bunk down and wait till sunrise; as it
was I had no end of a bother and fun. I struck
the river about a mile higher than where I had
crossed it, and got mixed up in a jungle kind of
a place, and could hardly get through; at last I
got a place in the river, where I forded it; it was
only about a foot deep there, and got into some
corn-fields. At last I struck the road, and got
back at 8 P.M., after eleven hours' walking. I
wasn't tired, and only a little stiff next day.
When I asked afterwards how far it was to the
place, I was told fifteen miles! It is tremendously
deceiving, as the atmosphere is so clear you could
almost see a flea crawl over there. It nearly crazed
two Mexicans when I told them I had been there,
as they never walk more than half-a-mile at a
stretch, and seldom that.

We found out that some large men had been
around getting sheep to stock a ranche, and the
price had gone up to as much as in Texas; and so
we couldn't buy, as there would be two duties to

PART I. pay, one out of the country, and another across the Sépt. 1878
 Prospecting. Rio Grande—so we returned. We didn't strike to Jan. 1879.

ranches either of the nights coming back, and so camped miles away from any one. Going down we had camped near a ranche each night for safety's sake. We are now back in Laredo, and, I think, are going down the bank of the Rio Grande, or somewhere. I am quickly picking up Mexican. I go into stores and spout out for something, or jabber to an old woman who lives in a house looking on to the same yard that our horses are in. Yesterday it was cold, but to-day it is hot again, and hardly a cloud anywhere. I am awfully well, but getting fat I'm afraid, in spite of riding eight hours a day. I fancy I shall get on swimmingly among stock, as I am learning about all the different kinds.

I shall know pretty well about all south-western Texas by the time we finish this trip. All the cattle-men one comes across are the very essence of good-humour and open-handedness; the great failing with them is that they can't keep out of the bar-rooms, and this is the reason why one hears such an account of the dangers about here. If they went about their business in a sober way, and didn't get into rows in gambling-hells

PART I. and bar-rooms, they wouldn't be always getting Sept. 1878
 respecting. killed. to
 Jan. 1879.

The Mexicans have a very good kind of earthenware in which they cook almost entirely. It is red and thin but tough, and will stand any heat; but the handle, although the pot is on the fire, remains cold. They are used for coffee and frejoles (the beans they eat so much of), and a pot to hold three pints costs $12\frac{1}{2}$ cents. They are the best things for cooking in I ever saw, and are made in all shapes and sizes.

16th. Just off to Rio Grande City.

Guinagato Ranche,
 20 miles from anywhere, Texas,

Jan. 2, 1879.

A happy New Year to you all.

Since I wrote, we have been rolling about the country between Laredo and Rio Grande City, and no post-office within 20 miles, the nearest being at Roma (this side of Rio Grande). We were a few days at Carrizo, and are now between there and Roma, and 15 miles inland from the river (Grande). We have got three lots of sheep, about 1000, and want 2000 or so more, which I expect we shall soon get. When at Carrizo,

PART I. W——, and the Judge, and I crossed the river Sept. 1878
 Prospecting. again and went down to Guerrero, which is a Jan. ^{to} 1879.
 picturesque little town on a very beautiful river, the Salado. The only other American in town was the American Consul, and so we were objects of great interest and curiosity. We put up at a small café, and the first night when we entered the small room (which opens on to the plaza) we found the bench opposite the table full of expectant Mexicans, sitting like dolls, evidently specially invited by our host to see the “curiosities.” When we left Laredo they had small-pox in town, and were “packing around dead Mexicans considerable,” as a cattle-driver informed me; but that is the only unhealthy place we have passed. We have been some days now at this ranche, which is like all the others,—a lot of small log houses surrounded by a fence, and about five or six large families, all related in some way, the men of which saunter about doing nothing more than shooting a deer occasionally. This is almost the only meat they eat, as they seldom kill a sheep, at least on this ranche. They have no capital except a lot of land and some cattle which they occasionally sell. They seldom buy anything but coffee and tobacco, and their cash

PART I. for this is what they receive from passers-by for Sept. 1878
 Prospecting. corn and for leave to water at their well. The Jan. 1879.^{to}

only work I have seen done since we have been here was by a party of six, one of whom was chiselling on a wooden plough and the other five were looking on! We shan't strike a post-office for some days, so to-morrow I intend riding to Roma to post this, in case you should be getting at all anxious from my not writing. By the by, I hope you had a merrier Christmas than we had. It was most amusing. We had an awful day, and were out of provisions, and corn, and everything, and nearly got frozen. I will give you a list of that day's proceedings: 5 a.m., got up from under wagon and found icicles all about. It was raining, everything was wet, sheep had stampeded and were at last found in three different places some miles off, and brought back by three of the others nearly at night. X— and I started in the middle of the day on horse-back for the nearest ranche to get corn for the horses. It was awful cold and raining, and we thought we had lost our way, but at last we heard the roosters crowing and got to the ranche, where we thawed and had coffee and "muscal," or brandy made from cactus. Then we started

PART I. back and dried the blankets and things as well Sept. 1878
 Prospecting. as possible in a rain, before a fire enough to roast ^{to} Jan. 1879.
 an ox. We had killed a wild pig, and had intended to have boar's head for Christmas dinner (only, as some one would remark, it was a sow), but unfortunately a dog ran off with the head. That day was the worst we have had, and no one is a bit the worse for it. It is now warm again, though it rains pretty often; but we got some more sheeting and have a tent fixed from the wagon, and so keep everything dry.

Jan. 3, 1879.

P. S.—I hope my Christmas Day description don't frighten you; it exaggerates itself on paper, and taking all in all, we are having bully weather, and are as healthy and jolly as pot-boys. I can't ride to Roma to-day, after all, so this must wait a day or two, much as I wish to get it off.

PART II.

WILLY'S AND COUSIN TIM'S
LETTERS.



SETTLING DOWN.



INTRODUCTORY.

PART II. WHEN we received Willy's letters from San Antonio we Jan. 1879
Settling. had many consultations, and made many enquiries, which ^{to} May, 1879.
resulted in our agreeing to send him out two Oxfordshire
Down rams and four ewes. These were ready to be
shipped by December, and by that time a Cousin, a year
older than Willy, and a chum of his, who had been three
years in a city office, had determined to go to Texas too,
and volunteered to take care of them as far as San Antonio.
As will be seen, he got them there just in time to meet
Willy (whose letters from home had all been accumulating
at Mr. L——'s office) on his return to San Antonio from his
trip into Mexico.—W. H.

FROM COUSIN TIM.

Smith and McNeill's Hotel,
Washington St., N. Y.,

Thursday afternoon, Jan. 16, 1879.

I'm afraid you'll think I've been a long time
before writing; but I have been waiting till I
could report on the sheep. The "England" only

PART II.
Settling.

arrived yesterday, owing to heavy weather, and the smashing of the steering apparatus. I went down to the dock where she's lying this morning, and saw the sheep: they are real beauties, and are in splendid health; indeed they ought to be, for they finished the last morsel of their grub this morning. Mr. P—— has had them taken to some stables where they will be well looked after, and will have them put on board my steamer (the "Rio Grande") by his own carman on Saturday. I find the run to Galveston takes about ten days, so I will provide about as much forage as they had before (I have got Mr. Howard's letter giving the quantities). I had a glorious run in the "City of Brussels," eleven days from Queenstown, - terribly rough weather part of the time, but once I got over the first feelings of qualminess I enjoyed myself thoroughly, and my appetite was proverbial. There was a very rum lot on board, natives of all countries, but a great many very decent fellows. We divided into messes after we had been on board a bit; ours was the most select of the lot. It was composed of a 'Frisco artist, two diggers, and a Yankee bo'sun (Jack Slack by name), and a widdy, one of the steerage belles, and your humble servant. Sometimes after a successful day's foraging in the cook's

PART II.
Settling.

galley, we'd invite outsiders to supper as a great honor, but we were most particular as to their antecedents.

Foraging was one of the chief businesses of the day: after every cabin meal you'd be sure to see a dozen or so loafers hanging round the cook's galley offering to do any small job, such as peeling potatoes, or washing dishes—anything in fact that came first; and if it wasn't overdone, two square meals a day might easily be raised. There was one woman who excited all our indignation by the barefaced way she was always beating up our preserves. Her plan was to pretend she was always sick, and could only eat a little of something delicate. One morning she was seen to eat two rolls, a basin of porridge, and a lot of ham and eggs for breakfast, and at dinner time I heard her tell the chief steward she'd hardly tasted a morsel for days, and did he think he could get her something extra? I could stand it no longer; up I jumped, and said, "Well, ma'am, if you call what you had for breakfast fasting for days, how much *do* you get through when you *do* have a real square meal?" She hated me ever after, and took every opportunity of alluding to *her* well-behaved children before me; but I was amply revenged, for all eyes

Jan. 1879
to
May, 1879.

PART II.
Settling.

were on her at meals, and if an unusually large loaf came on the table, it was always passed down to the "delicate Lady." We had plenty of exercise, for the second officer used to come to the steerage every day and ask for volunteers to haul on ropes, or holystone the decks, or something of the sort; if it had been to be keel-hauled I think we'd have gone, we were so glad of something to do. For five days we shipped so many big seas, that it wasn't safe to go on deck. One of them swept me under a small signal gun, and barked my shins awfully. We had to have our soup and everything out of mess, she rolled about so. I was rather uncomfortable at first, because I had no bed, but I soon got accustomed to the boards, and slept as well, in fact better, than most of the others. Some of them were awful restless beggars, and would get up at two in the morning and roam about all night, talking or playing seven up; the way they were cussed was highly gratifying to the disturbed ones. The stewards were the decentest fellows I ever met; they were so popular on board, that we gave them three cheers when we left. I should never think of going cabin though; steerage is far too comfortable and jolly, and we had a deal more fun than the cabin passengers ever had aft.

Jan. 1879
to
May, 1879.

PART II.
Settling.

They used to come and look on when we were dancing, nearly every evening. Our only musical instrument was a fiddle, which was played by the bar-keeper splendidly. Some of the fellows dressed as ladies, and would walk about arm in arm, on deck, amidst roars of laughter. There was one very amusing man on board, named Andrew S——; he was just the shape of a barrel, pointed at each end; he was always going for something for his wife, about whose existence we were slightly sceptical; if there was such a person, her capacity for beer was something enormous. It's very cold here, and there's a foot of snow on the ground; traffic's almost entirely stopped, except with sleighs, of which there are any quantity. I like New York itself very much, and certainly think in time it will lick London all to nothing. I suppose you have seen their elevated railroads? They are far nicer than the Metropolitan Railway, and the carriages are better furnished, besides being able to go anywhere in the City for 5 cents. I will write again from Key West, which is the only port we touch at. There's such a queer crowd here, Texan drovers, and all sorts of men. The fare to San Antonio by rail is \$75, so it's an immense saving going by sea.

Jan. 1879
to
May, 1879.

R. M. S. "Rio Grande,"
Off the coast of Florida,
Jan. 24, 1879.

PART II.
Settling.

I am just writing a few lines to report on the sheep as I promised; but whether they'll ever reach you or not I'm very uncertain, as I am going to entrust them to an old boy on board who leaves us at Key West. The sheep are all right so far, and seem to me to be in very fair condition. They did not take very kindly to the forage provided for them in New York, as the American hay is so much coarser than the English, and they sent no turnips as I told them to do. However, they are getting used to it now, and eat it pretty well. The weather here is awfully hot and sultry, very different to New York; but the ship is very well ventilated, so I don't feel it much. The sheep have been noticed a great deal by everybody on board, and several of the cabin passengers have asked for Mr. Howard's address, as they wanted to get some like them. The sailors are very fond of them, but seem to have strange ideas what's good for them in the way of food. I caught one of them the other day feeding them with a copy of the "Tribune," which

PART II.
Settling.

he said was the best thing possible for them. Jan. 1879
The carpenter spends half his time playing with ^{to} May, 1879.
them; but he's under the impression that they bite, so he's very careful not to put his hands too near. I am writing this in my shirt sleeves, and suppose in England you are all shivering in the wet. A little boat came off from a lighthouse this morning for papers and vegetables; there was only one man in it, and he very nearly upset himself standing up to take off his hat to the ladies. The skipper's been fishing for barracoutas all day, but I've not seen him catch any yet. We are much better fed here than on the "City of Brussels"—beefsteaks, potatoes, rolls and coffee every morning for breakfast, and a very good dinner and tea. We get into Key West to-night about 8 o'clock, and leave again at 10. I believe there's nothing to be seen but cigars, turtles, and sponges.

Galveston,

Monday evening, Jan. 27, 1879.

P.S. Sheep landed to-day, all in good condition; are going on by freight-train to-night. I accompany them in same van. This is an awful rum place.

FROM WILLY.

Mr. L——'s Office, San Antonio, Texas,

Jan. 30, 1879.

PART II.
Settling.

Just back from our trip. Two of the bosses Jan. 1879
and self left W—— and the Mexican 160 or so ^{to} May, 1879.
miles off, to follow with the 1700 odd sheep, and
we rolled up in the wagon. I am awful fat and
jolly. We got in here about 6.30 to-night, and
after getting a room and some grub, I came round
to the above's office, just in time to catch him
before he went to the theatre, so I have got all
my letters and his office to myself. I have just
got through my letters and will post this to-night,
as owing to our not having struck a post-office
for some weeks, I'm afraid you must have thought
"a Greaser¹ had leaded me," as I see the doctor
says in one of his letters; tell him though, it's
not more than a 5-cent. business in some cases.
Thanks for all you've done about the sheep. It
all comes in bully if they are all right. I will be
after them and Ted early to-morrow, and will
probably write you then or next day. We
had a bully time up from Mexico, and latterly
awfully hot. We rode in the wagon without

¹ "Greaser," the Western equivalent for "a Mexican."

PART II.
Settling.

coats, and with sleeves tucked up. But more of ^{Jan. 1879} this in the next as it is now considerably after ^{to} May, 1879. 10 o'clock, and, owing to its coming on to drizzle at 3 o'clock this morning, we had to turn out and get bedding, &c., into the wagon, eat breakfast, and roll out; especially as we had a 33 mile drive to make, and horses knocked up a bit, or rather a good deal.

P.S. I'm awfully glad Tim has come out. I often thought (lately) of writing to him about it, only I meant to get a little straight before doing so, so that it shouldn't be a case of the blind leading the blind; but I guess we'll make it somehow.

P.S. Seen sheep, apparently in fine condition. Just off after Tim and Jem.

Jem's Hut, A——'s Pasture,
4 miles out of San Antonio,
Feb. 2, 1879.

The sheep are very much admired, and are, apparently, in splendid condition. I do not at present feel capable of managing sheep on my own hook, and so have, after a long talk with Jem, seen Capt. T——, who is an Englishman with a ranche out here. He has been very kind to me, and has promised to take care of them till I want them, which will not

PART II.
Settling.

be for eight or ten months I expect, that is till Jan. 1879
the season comes on in October. Capt. T—— has ^{to} May, 1879.
been very fortunate with his sheep this winter,
not having lost one. These will be safer with
him than anyone else. They will be with his
and receive the same attention therefore, and he
is to use the rams this season if he wants to. I,
in the meantime, shall study up the business on
ranches, &c. I hope, before October, to have
taken up some land with Tim, and to know
what I'm up to. Then these sheep, if they live
(and they will have every chance to), will be ac-
climatized and will give us a fine beginning. No-
thing like "blowing" in this country! *They* are
like a flock of sheep, if one man damns or praises
a thing the rest will follow. So you will see
by the paper¹ I send you that I was determined
to get people running in the right direction at
once. They will now be praised higher by each
person who tells another about them, you bet!
Tim and I are living with Jem and his man.
It is quite a small hut, but very comfortable.
We had five or six visitors to-day—cattle-men—
they are the jolliest fellows possible. We all have
been sitting in the huts as it has been raining.

¹ A San Antonio journal. See extract, *infra* p. 54.

PART II.
Settling.

One fellow tried to get Jem's man to dine with him, so as to leave Jem to do the cooking, but he couldn't do it. Yesterday, Tim got some "overalls," or coarse brown trousers and coat, and he is now wearing them. The coat is like an Eton jacket, so you may imagine what "six foot one" looks like in it. Our visitors are now gone, and Jem's man is greasing some saddle leathers, and Jem, who has just washed the dishes, is reading a paper, and so is Tim. Jem is looking very well. This is a most wonderful climate, I think, and seems to agree with every one. . . . That emigrant agent will be getting into pretty hot water very soon, if he hasn't done so already. Tim met several fellows as he came from New York, who were cursing him; and I read in a newspaper yesterday that he had sold a man 800 acres of land at —, which is a place between Galveston and here, with a railway restaurant and four houses. He described it as a growing town, with five hotels and several good shops, and on one side of the 800 acres was said to be a stream, "which, although not quite a river, abounded in several kinds of fish." Well, the man arrived at — with his wife, to find the town as I describe 'it, and the stream a dry

PART II.
Settling.

creek which never ran in its life, and the 800 acres of land in a high state of cultivation to be a piece of the prairie land, which is all round the place; so he went back to Galveston to wait till he could earn enough to take him back to England. Every one out here gives "that Emigrant man" a bad name, and if he came out I expect he would be shot. For a single man this country is all he describes it, or nearly so: but a married man expecting to settle down and make a living at once is badly sold, unless he has a lot of capital.

.

Flirt would be a great pet out here, as all the dogs are large and ugly, except one sort which the Mexicans have. They are hideously ugly, though small, and haven't a bit of hair on except a sort of narrow ridge of bristles along their backs. They look as if they had been shaved, but are really born so.

Cattle-men about here are just as Mark Twain paints them, and keep one roaring with their quaint sayings. Our party went up to the ranche of a fellow they knew as we were returning from Mexico. He suddenly recognized the Judge, and roared out his best welcome thus—"Well, d——

PART II. your old soul, *how* IN THE H—— are you, any Jan. 1879
 Settling. how?" his whole face beaming with pleasure. ^{to} May, 1879.

This is the sort of welcome one gets. They are so glad to see you that they sort of emphasize a bit.

.

We camped one night on the river coming up, about two weeks ago ; it was awful hot, and we bathed in one of the pools, for at this time of year it is a series of pools and doesn't run ; and then I went out turkey-shooting. I saw a flock of ten or so run behind a cow about fifteen yards off ; so I stooped down behind a bush till the cow should go away. The cow thought I was serenading her and jumped about, and the turkeys got away in the brush and I couldn't track 'em. You bet, I felt inclined to pay that durned cow. One day we caught a land turtle and baked it, and ate it and its eleven eggs, which were the same size as a yolk of an egg, and tasted just like one.

We have very strong north winds here, and they have blown Jem's hut a foot or two out of perpendicular. (Here follows a sketch of the shanty.)

PART II. *Half-Column Clipping from the "San Antonio Daily Jan. 1879
Settling. —" of Sunday morning, Feb. 2, 1879, enclosed* ^{to} *May, 1879.
in foregoing letter.*

"OXFORDSHIRE DOWNS.

"ARRIVAL OF A SUPERIOR BREED OF ENGLISH SHEEP—
A FORMIDABLE RIVAL OF THE FAMOUS HAMPSHIRE
AND SHROPSHIRE.

"Yesterday a reporter of the — was shown by Mr. W. H— a flock of sheep, consisting of two bucks and four ewes, recently imported by him from England for breeding purposes. These animals are," &c., &c. (giving all that was claimed for the sheep by their breeder, Mr. Howard).

"The sheep imported by Mr. H—, and to which particular reference is now made, were purchased directly from Mr. Howard, and were brought out under the immediate superintendence of Mr. T. W—. They are splendid animals, and their magnificent fleeces will open the eyes," &c., &c.

FROM COUSIN TIM.

Jem's Camp, San Antonio,
Monday, Feb. 3, 1879.

You will have heard from Willy before this that I arrived with the sheep all right. They (i. e. the sheep), I am glad to say, are in splendid condition, and could not have looked better the day they were put on board in Liverpool. You cannot imagine how they've been admired; every time

PART II. I pass the stables where they are lying there is a Jan. 1879
Settling. small crowd looking on and asking questions. ^{to} May, 1879.

It was just the same at Galveston; everybody knew all about them half-an-hour after they were landed. I assure you it would have required a couple of clerks and a principal to answer half the enquiries that were made of me. I got just mad at last and left. I had rather a rough time of it in the freight train (of course I travelled with the sheep) coming up to San Antonio. The first night I slept on the floor of a cattle truck with half-an-inch of water in it, and the unfeeling brutes turned me out at four in the morning at a little out-of-the-way place called Harrisburg, and left me to wander about on the line looking for some human habitation. However, I met the watchman, and he took me in and gave me a chair to sleep on; I had to wait there till five in the evening, and it was just slow I can tell you. That night I was a little more comfortable as I managed to get a couple of cushions, so I slept like a top till half-past four in the morning, when they turned me out again; it was just maddening. After abusing the Company for upwards of an hour, I started in search of water for the sheep with a lantern and a bucket, and after a lot of groping about in the

PART II.
Settling.

dark found a well, and just as I was getting the water a great ugly black dog, a trifle smaller than a cow, hunted me off the premises. But I did get some at last out of a cistern, so I was happy. Freight trains on these lines are about the slowest things in creation. I frequently used to jump off and cut cactus leaves for my charges, and catch her up again before she'd gone a hundred yards. In fact, I was cautioned about walking too fast in front in case I lost sight of her altogether. At any rate here I am at last. I am sorry to say I was only able to give Willy five guineas change out of the cheque you sent, but there were a lot of little expenses that mounted up considerably. Jem's camp is a jolly place if the chimney would only draw; as it is, my eyes are watering so that I can hardly see to write. I got rather frightened about the sheep off Key West, which is a regular West Indian place, populated almost entirely by Cubans and niggers: the steamer's side was so hot that you could not bear your hand on it, and they were all lying gasping for breath; however, with plenty of iced water they pulled through. Did I tell you about the dead fish we passed through off the coast of Florida? One of the steerage passengers happened to be looking over the side, and

Jan. 1879
to
May, 1879.

PART II. saw something white right ahead, which proved, Jan. 1879
 Settling. when we got up to it, to be an immense shoal of ^{to} May, 1879.
 dead fish, sixty-five miles long; in some places it
 was thicker than others, but there was always a large
 quantity round us for that distance. Somebody
 said they were killed by an eruption in the Gulf,
 but I have not learnt whether that was the true
 reason or not. . . .

P.S. I've just got a gorgeous pair of top-boots,
 with "Hamilton Boot" printed in gold letters in
 front of them. I expect they'd create a sensation
 in the Row!

FROM WILLY.

Jem's Hut, San Antonio,
 Feb. 10, 1879.

My mind is at last easy with regard to the
 sheep. I started with them on Wednesday, the
 5th, with a man, and a wagon in which we had
 the animals. We had a wet norther that night
 and next day up to about 2 p.m., when we reached
 Capt. T——'s ranche. He was very jolly, and
 made me stay that night, and in about two weeks
 I am going to spend a week or so there. He has
 got a lovely place amongst hills, with lots of ever-

PART II. green oaks. He has about 9×6 miles, half of Jan. 1879
Settling. which is fenced; and his house is in the middle ^{to} May, 1879.
of the fenced part. It stands on a rise above a
small stream, and you cannot see it till within
a few hundred yards. He has several English
fellows there. Tim and I just off down country.

B——'s Ranche, near Beeville, Bee Co.,

Feb. 22, 1879.

This just to say that I'm well and flourishing.
Went with Tim to Pleasanton, and for a week
or so since that have been paying visits to several
ranches down here, 100 or so miles from San
Antonio. I ride about, and camp under a tree.
At present I am staying with two English brothers
of the name of B——, very jolly fellows. They've
got over 10,000 acres here of the prettiest country
I've seen. I'm pumping everyone about sheep.
Going to start for San Antonio on the 24th, I
think; and then going to visit Capt. T——. It's
awful hot—not a drop of rain for weeks.

San Antonio, Texas,

March 4, 1879.

Just back from my rambles down South. I
have been over lots of land, and at lots of ranches,
and have learnt everything almost,—ploughing,

PART II.
Settling.

and harrowing, and all the rest of it. I got the Jan. 1879
quinine all right, thanks: they use it a great deal ^{to} May, 1879.
out here. Since I have been here, however, I
haven't needed any medicine, and don't feel like
wanting it. Thanks for your advice about sheep.
The best sheep can be bought for \$3½ now; though,
after the losses in the winter, I expect they'll go
up. About half the sheep died, I think. I am just
off up to Capt. T——'s, and will write from there.

COUSIN TIM TO HIS BROTHER.

General M——'s Rancho, L—— Springs,
March 4, 1879.

Here I am, settled at last; and I'm going to
tell you all about it. When I left Jem's camp
near San Antonio, as I told you in my last, I
went straight to Capt. T——'s, to see if I could
get on his rancho; but he was already over-
stocked with hands. However, he recommended
me to try at General M——': so next morning
I came here, and saw the general's son-in-law,
Major E——, and after a little talking, agreed with
him to come and take entire charge of his flock of
Angora goats; for which he pays me a pound
a month, with board, and a tent to sleep in. Of

PART II. course this is not much; but it's better than Jan. 1879
Settling. nothing to start with, for you see I know nothing ^{to} May, 1879.
whatever about them, and have to have a good
deal of help at first, and he has promised to give
me something better, if I get on well, after a bit.
My work consists of driving them out to pasture
during the day, and seeing to the kids in the
evening, when I get home. His ranche is about
3000 acres, and I take them pretty well all over
it. This would be pretty hard if I had to walk, as
goats travel very fast; but as I'm allowed two
horses it's not so very difficult, though it's a little
monotonous at times, as I seldom see a soul all
day. I hope you will be able to read this; but
if you knew the difficulties I've had, you'd excuse
me. First of all I bought a bottle of ink, and got
ready to write to you, three days ago, and when
everything was ready, I discovered that the bottle
had fallen out of my pocket. Next day I bor-
rowed a bottle from the major, and prepared
again, but whilst I was getting ready the cork
slipped out; so did the ink; so I was stopped for
that night. To-night I borrowed another bottle,
and then discovered I'd got no pen. I was ashamed
to go up to the house to borrow one, so I caught
an old turkey, and pulled some feathers out of

PART II.
Settling.

her tail, and tried to make a pen. Hence the bad writing. There are three other men employed on the place, all of whom are Mexicans, and the house-servants are, too, so I hear very little but Spanish spoken, and am picking up a little. The Major is a remarkably nice man, and is very good to me. He does all the real working of the estate; the General only coming once a fortnight to see how things are getting on. My tent, where I am writing this, is such a snug little place. I've fenced it all in with brushwood to keep the cows out. I'm glad to say I've not got to cook for myself, but get all my meals up at the house; and very good ones they are, too, so I'm very comfortable. There is a good deal of game round here, mostly deer and turkeys. I had a capital run after the latter some days ago, but did not succeed in getting one, as my coat fell off my saddle just when I was getting near enough for a shot, and I had to go back for it. The deer are generally very shy and hard to get at. I got within 70 yards of some yesterday, but I had no fire-arms with me. The greatest trouble we have here is the want of water. There is none fit to drink within two miles, and even then it's as muddy as pea-soup. There has been no rain for four months,

Jan. 1879
to
May, 1879.

PART II. so all the creeks and waterholes are quite dry. Jan. 1879
 Settling. Sheep-raising appears to be the most profitable ^{to} May, 1879.

business in Texas, if they are well looked after. To start in a small way you want a capital of about £250. With this, and taking good care of his sheep, a man ought to do well out here; better, I think, than in cattle, as the country is too dry for them. A number of the sheep-ranchers who come out here, after they have once got started, leave their flock entirely to the care of their shepherds, and they themselves loaf around town, smoking and drinking, and naturally enough soon lose all their money. I had intended to make this a long letter, but it's miserable work writing with this beastly pen, so I'll say, Good night. . . .

P.S. I'll buy a decent pen next week, and write a good letter. Old Graphics would be most acceptable.

WILLY TO MADGE.

Captain T——'s,
 March 7, 1879.

My sheep are getting on very well; they run in the same field as some Cotswold sheep. These have white faces, and the others scorn them, as they are very proud of their black faces; and when

PART II. eating out of a trough budge the others away Jan. 1879
 Settling. with disdain. I have just been riding all over the ^{to} May, 1879.
 country on horseback, camping wherever I happened to be at sundown—sometimes under a tree, sometimes at a ranche, where they always welcome one. Once I had an awfully fine camping place. I had just laid in a nose-bag full of grub (as I hadn't struck a store for some time), and was peckish. It was nearly sundown, and I rode out of the village to find a good tree to enjoy my repast under. I passed a house where there was a well and a small enclosure with half a small haystack in it; and I went up to the house to ask if I might draw water. The house was bang empty; evidently deserted some time back; so I jumped for joy, turned my horse into the enclosure with the hay, and took possession of the well (which had very good water) and house; made a good hay-bed, and announced that dinner was ready. Then I let into tinned pigs' feet and bread; second course, cheese and bread; desert, dried apples; drink, water; salt served with each course; and had a splendid sleep afterwards. Taking possession in this way would be rum in England, but here it's all right; probably the house will rot (they are of wood) before anyone uses the land again.

WILLY TO HIS FATHER.

Captain T——'s,

March 7, 1879.

PART II.
Settling.

I got here the day before yesterday, and found Jan. 1879
all the sheep in excellent condition. I have very ^{to} May, 1879.
sanguine hopes with regard to the offspring when
crossed with some Merino bred sheep, if they can
only stand the heat. In a day or two I am going
up North to look at land. It is healthier up there
than South of San Antonio; and down in the
South it is almost or quite impossible to find
land at a moderate price with good water on it.
Capt. T——'s land is the best watered in the country
I fancy; he has thirteen springs on his 6000 acres,
and the creek that runs below his house has a
rock bed, and he is building a dam some way
down which will fill the bed of the creek, which
is deep and broad, with water: so he will have
a running lake, about 10 to 20 yards broad by
400 yards long, or more, in front of his house.
Yesterday one of his pupils and I went out hunt-
ing up cattle and horses. I rode one of the best
horses I was ever on; he never seemed to get
blown, and just enjoyed running in as much as
I did. He has been trained to it, and is awfully

PART II.
Settling.

quick. Some of the horses were pretty wild, and Jan. 1879
 would dart about all over the place; but "Pat" (my ^{to} May, 1879.
 horse) seemed to see which way they were going
 to go, and sometimes swung round nearly a com-
 plete double when going full tilt; so, of course, if
 you don't watch the movements of the horse you're
 after pretty closely, "you've got to swing off."
 Tim tells me that Dick is coming out; if he is,
 will you get him to bring me out a small packet
 of the following seeds—turnip, mangold wurzel,
 clover, and meadow-grass. I want to try them
 on a small scale. Also, if Dick can bring it,
 "Sheep: their breeds, management, and diseases,"
 by William Youatt, published by Simpkin, Mar-
 shall, and Co., Stationers' Hall Court, if it is not
 out of print. It costs 8s., and I presume that
 the half-yearly dividend on the bond which you
 speak of will cover this and the seeds. As soon
 as I can find a suitable piece of land, I shall buy
 it, and grow corn and millet. There is a very
 good sale for both. Good land will grow 50 to
 100 bushels of corn to an acre, which corn sells
 at 45 cts. to \$1 per bushel, according to the
 market. I shall begin with only enough sheep
 for these two bucks, and in a very few years I
 shall have a very valuable flock all of one kind,

PART II.
Settling.

which is a great thing. I shall keep fowls, Jan. 1879
pigs, and turkeys; so all the food I shall have ^{to} May, 1879.
to buy will be flour and coffee, sugar and salt,
as I shall probably rear a few goats for meat
purposes. All of these can be bought very cheap,
and I can make more money this way than by
working for any one; and besides, of course my
stock increases and ranche improves, and becomes
more valuable. The only difficulty I see is land.
The \$500 I have will *well* cover small stock, and
horses, and wagon, provisions, &c. I have been
carefully into it and know it. Land may cost
me \$250; I don't intend that it shall cost me
more, as I can get what I want for this, so that
if — would let me lay out £50 or under of the
money you mention in land, it would help me
a good deal. I can begin making money directly
I get started, and would pay this back with five
per cent. interest, as soon as possible. I should
like to know by return if there is really the least
objection to this, as, if there is, I will make ar-
rangements to run my sheep on a ranche and
work there; but this does not pay so well, as
I should have to work for nothing, for running
my sheep on the ranche-owner's ground.

WILLY TO HIS FATHER.

San Antonio,

March 13, 1879.

PART II.
Settling.

... With regard to the Oxfordshire Down sheep Jan. 1879
 being a white elephant, you can't upset us any out to
 here; you may *send* a white elephant if you like, May, 1879.
 we'll make him pay, grow wool on him if neces-
 sary! Tim is working on a farm and gets awfully
 well fed. I went to see him on my way back from
 T——'s, and caught him up, driving back cattle
 from water. He sleeps in a tent, where he has
 plenty of company in the shape of—well, not fleas;
 they are animals Townsend calls red bugs in one of
 his Field letters, in which he says he had to get up
 in the middle of the night and go and get a bathe
 in a stream, they worried him so. There is a
 beetle out here, called the tumble-bug in polite
 society, that rolls a ball five times as big as itself.
 A green English fellow, just out the other day,
 asked "why was that ball pushing that bug
 about¹?"

P.S. \$484 received: as soon as I can find the
 land I want, we'll go booming.

¹ Tumble-bugs march stern foremost, pushing the lumps with
 their hind legs.

FROM WILLY TO MADGE.

San Antonio,

March 13, 1879.

PART II.
Settling.

I'm trying to sell my pony to-day as he only carries me thirty-five miles a-day, which won't suit yours, &c. Jem starts on the trail in a few days now; he is awfully glad, as he says hanging around puts him out of temper and gets away with the needful. Tim has a very jolly place and master—looking after cattle, horses, and pigs. He was herding goats, but they are kidding now, and so have been put under an experienced man. He used to employ his time in chasing rabbits into hollow trees (they don't have holes in the ground) and then burning them out; then he took them home in the evening and ate them. It's a lovely day, but not too hot, as the wind's blowing.

FROM WILLY.

San Antonio,

March 20, 1879.

I'm just watery hot, and I've been rushing about all day getting my team and baggage, as I've bought 160 acres near B——; it's an awfully hilly

PART II.
Settling.

country, but fine grass, and healthy. There is un-^{Jan. 1879}located land next door to me, not such good land,^{to} May, 1879. which will only cost me under \$100 per 640 acres (!), and I can preempt eighty acres more for a small fee, and, if I want to fence, have the privilege of fencing in the 640 which I lay out for the State, next to my 640 acres. Of course, when the State can sell the land I have to take my fence off its 640 acres (if I *do* fence it), but, as all State land is reserved at \$1 50c., it will be years before this is bought. I am going to try and get some sheep "on shares," i. e. I take care of them for the owner, and we divide profits and increase. Jem started after cattle yesterday. I met him as I came from B——. A—— and friend haven't turned up yet; when they do I am going to try and get them to come and help me get ship-shape at my place, as Tim can't join me till after his month is out, which is on the 31st inst. I will tell you more about the place afterwards, when I have taken stock of it more. I traded my pony and got a good horse; cost me \$40 though. His name is "Billy," and he runs in the wagon with a mare whose name is "Bet": she cost me \$25. They are both large horses, and about the same size, and go well. Bet is a grey, and Billy a dun. The \$500 covered

PART II. everything; 160 acres, wagon, harness, horses, Jan. 1879
 Settling. plough, corn, and hosts of cooking things, &c., and to
 grub for a tremendous time. I am off to collect May, 1879.
 the various parcels which are waiting for me.
 When the \$100 come, I shall locate the 640 acres.
 The 160 acres tract has a hut on it, and a field,
 and more land which can be ploughed; whereas
 the unlocated land is hilly and only good for
 stock. I paid (or rather shall pay when I get to
 B——) \$225 for the 160 acres. I shall be on the
 safe side for provisions for over a year, and before
 that Tim and I will be making money. The only
 provisions we shall have to buy will be coffee,
 molasses, sugar, salt, flour, and pepper, as we shall
 raise vegetables, bacon, meat, eggs, and honey.
 There are two fellows here, one English and one
 American, that I know personally, who want to go
 into cattle; so I am going to have a consultation
 with some one about the unlocated land, and if
 they think it will raise cattle well I shall try and
 get one of them to go into it with me, he buying
 and owning 100 cows and a bull or two, and I
 finding land, houses, winter-fodder, &c., on half
 profits. I can fence the 640 acres and pens, &c.
 for about £100, and of course raising cattle is a
 good thing. Cows can be bought for \$5 or \$10,

PART II.
Settling.

and their male calves when two years old would be worth that. Jan. 1879
to
May, 1879.

My address in future will be—

Post Office, B——,
Texas.

FROM TIM.

General M——'s Ranche,
March 21, 1879.

. . . Willy has bought a place of 160 acres of good land, lying about fourteen miles from here, and thirty from San Antonio. A few days ago he called here and offered me the chance of working it with him for half the profits, deducting for what my share of the provisions cost, he supplying everything in the shape of horses, wagons, farm implements, &c. I join him at the end of the month, and we intend to raise corn, fruit, and vegetables, for all of which there is a good demand. . . . You needn't have been afraid of troubling the bankers by sending too many letters to their care. There are several hundred addressed there every day, and the partners themselves never see them. They're put into a large box with pigeon-holes for each letter in the alphabet, and the owners

PART II.
Settling.

simply walk in and take them out. . . . I gave up ^{Jan. 1879}
minding the goats, after a week of it, to the old ^{to} May, 1879.
goatherd again, and the Major made me cowboy
instead. My work now consists of hunting for lost
cattle, and taking large herds to the waterholes
about twelve miles from here. I am writing this
lying out in the woods, looking after a lot of fine
bulls, which are too valuable to be left alone, to
turn up some day or another, as is done by all our
neighbours. Some of them simply live in the
saddle, keeping their cattle from going too far.
I have been doing so for the last week, as we lost
no end of animals. One day, sixty goats broke
out of the pen, and got some miles from here. It
took me a whole day to find them, and since then
I've been riding after lost stock nearly every day.
I'm glad to say that I am always fortunate enough
to find them, but it's very tiring work, and knocks
up no end of horses. I have to have two fresh
ones every day, and both are dead beat at night.
However, I've learnt to drive wild cattle, which is
something. The first time I tried I could do
nothing whatever with them, and had to go back
for help, but now I can steer them through another
herd without mixing them, with anyone round
here. It's very exciting when you're driving

PART II. twenty or thirty head of cattle through a large Jan. 1879
Settling. herd of the scrub brutes, preventing them from ^{to} May, 1879.
getting mixed, and cutting them out if they do.
I can tell you it's considerably harder than driving
a quill in Mark Lane, but I wouldn't exchange
lives for a good deal. This ranche is a very fine
one, though it's only 3000 acres. Most of the
land is good, and there's been \$12000 spent, in the
last year, in improvements. All the stock is well
bred, from the cows to the very ducks, which are
Muscovy; but I can't see how the money is to be
returned for years to come, and if the stock can't
stand the climate there will be a great deal lost.
This winter four heifers died, which cost \$375
apiece, in Illinois, in the autumn. For the Major's
sake I hope the rest will be able to stand the heat
of the summer, but I should very much doubt it.
I had a narrow shave of being stung by a scorpion
the last time I was at Jem's camp. D—— and I
were sleeping together in his little shanty, and had
rolled up an overcoat to serve as a pillow, and in
the morning when I woke there was one of the
brutes lying on it, right between our heads. He
had crawled there for warmth, I suppose. If either
of us had turned he must have been nipped.
There are any amount of snakes around here,

PART II.
Settling.

principally the gentlemen with rattles. We killed Jan. 1879
one a few days ago six feet long. He had nine-^{to} May, 1879.
teen rattles in his tail. I generally use a little
Scotch terrier to kill them. He just seizes them
by the middle of the body and shakes the life out
of them, and then eats 'em. He seems to know as
well as possible that, if he's bitten, it's all up with
him, and goes hopping about, keeping his legs out
of the way till they're dead.

FROM WILLY.

The Shanty,

March 30, 1879.

My letters have been so full of small com-
missions, you must almost dread opening them;
but I think I am straight now. I have been work-
ing like a nigger for the last seven or eight days.
My man and I got here on the 22nd, and we have
nearly cleared three acres of stones (some of which
are as big as a man's body), and we are well on
with tying up grass for thatching. I cut the grass,
which is a kind used here for thatching, in the
creek, not 100 yards from the door. We should
have finished thatching probably, only I wasted
three days in going to San Antonio, to see if that

PART II.
Settling.

money had arrived, as I am very anxious to secure Jan. 1879
the 640 acres next me, before anyone else. How-^{to} May, 1879.
ever I am daily expecting to hear from L—— of
its arrival, and hope the land will wait for me. A
large creek runs by here, about twenty yards in
front of the door, but the water only runs half the
year or so, during the rainy season. In front of
the house, there are 100 or more yards of level
rock-bed, with steep sides about six feet high, and
I am going to dam this up, and if it holds water,
we shall have a lake. Inquisitive neighbours came
in at first, like grandmothers round a daughter's
first-born, to give all sorts of opinions and advice;
but they have found out they're not wanted. Tim
joins me on April 1. He and I are going into
partnership with regard to all products of the field,
corn, &c. I find land, and tools, and camp neces-
saries, which of course remain my property, and
we each pay our share of the grub-bill. We ought
to make a good thing of it, not only in corn, and
perhaps cotton, but in vegetables. B—— is cram
full of sick people; there are three *large* hotels,
and numbers of boarding houses. In short, it is
only a large consumption hospital: and yet I
haven't seen a fresh vegetable in town! We are
near enough (5 miles) to run a van in everyday, if

PART II.
Settling.

necessary, and I expect we should sell all we could raise. You ought to see me now; squatted on the floor, leaning against a plough, barrels of flour and corn-meal, bags of beans and rice, kegs of molasses, frying-pans, skillets and coffee pot, spades, &c., &c., all around; chickens just going to roost in the trees outside, over the waggon. Grub is awful cheap, I will give you a few items of the only necessities. Beef 4 cents and 5 cents per lb.; bacon 8 cents (this one can cure oneself); flour \$7 per barrel, or in small quantities \$3 per 100 lbs.; beans 35 lbs. for \$1; sugar 10 lbs. and 12 lbs. for \$1; Molasses, \$4 per 8 gal. keg; salt, \$2 per cwt.; coffee, in the green bean, 6 lbs. for \$1; rice, 15 lbs. for \$1. Apropos of coffee, Capt. T—— tells an amusing story of himself. When he and Mrs. T—— came out, about a year ago, they went shopping; and amongst other things, he asked to be shewn some coffee. The man of course brought the green beans—it is seldom sold anyhow else here—“That’s not coffee” says Capt. T——, “coffee’s brown stuff, like snuff, you can’t fool me!” It has been a standing joke against him ever since, in San Antonio.

To-day has been almost suffocatingly hot, and very little breeze for a wonder. I had a bathe,

Jan. 1879
to
May, 1879.

PART II.
Settling.

and couldn't lean against the rock, it was so hot. Jan. 1879
I hadn't *much* of a bathe though, only a splash: ^{to} May, 1879.
coming back from town, I came across a splendid
hole and stripped, and was just going in, when I
saw a snake swimming about with his head out of
water. This was enough, I splashed in the shallow
water near the hole. I don't mind bathing where
there *may* be snakes, as they seldom if ever touch
one, but after seeing one one doesn't exactly like
to take a bath with it. I have got a Scotchman
working with me. He came to me with tears in
his eyes, just before I left San Antonio, and asked
if I knew where he could get a job, as he hadn't
a cent., and had slept and eaten just where he
could for some days; so I have taken him on for
a short time, till he gets stronger. I left him in
charge here while I returned to San Antonio, and
on my return, found his work well got forward.
He never did manual work before, having tried to
get a school, as he is well educated. He is about
twenty-six or twenty-seven I should say, and came
out five years ago, as his father, who is a Scotch
clergyman, wasn't well off, and had a large family,
of which he is the eldest. He had saved up money
in New York, for a visit home last year, but was
taken ill, and it went to the doctor. He is to be

PART II.
Settling.

pitied, but there are many more like him out here. Jan. 1879
He is getting stronger, and I expect will drop the ^{to} May, 1879.
idea of a school, and work out of doors, which will
be much better for him. I wish you could see this
place. You ought to come and live here! It is
in a tremendously long valley, and the healthiest
locality in Texas. I must cook our supper now,
so goodbye.

FROM COUSIN TIM.

Willy's Shanty,

Sunday, April 6, 1879.

Here I am at last, permanently settled, I hope, for some time to come. I got here last Tuesday morning, having come straight from the General's the day my month was up, and found Willy hard at work thatching the roof, after a fashion he learned in Mexico. It takes a long while to do, but makes a capital roof when you do get it up: we have been hard at work at it ever since, and it's not finished yet. . . . We are all in great confusion, and shall be till we get the roof on and make a table. At present we eat all our meals sitting on the floor. I tried my hand at making bread a few days ago, for the first time, and succeeded to perfection. It just

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Settling.

rose beautifully, and since then I've always done it, and never had a failure. It's almost exactly similar to that used in the Irish cabins, except where we use Indian meal, which is a little cheaper but not so nice. Our hours at present are from 5 a.m. to 7 p.m., but I expect they will be earlier after a bit. This is a gloriously healthy place, and much cooler than farther South. The town near us is a great resort for invalids in summer: people are ordered there much the same as they are to the hills in India. . . . Our stock consists of three horses, six sheep, twelve hens, and a few tame turkeys which I bought from our nearest neighbour, a Cumberland man. . . . I'm afraid you'd hardly own us if you saw us now: we look so disreputable in our old canvas trousers and flannel shirts, and *such* seedy hats. But nobody here dresses respectably except the store-keepers. I meet no end of snakes whilst I'm at work; principally harmless ones. I killed four in less than an hour a few days ago. I just slice off their heads and bring them home for the chickens, who are very fond of them. One of the vicious ones gave me a great start. I was sitting in the grass, under a bush, and felt something tickling the back of my neck: at first I took no notice,

Jan. 1879
to
May, 1879.

PART II.
Settling.

thinking it was a straw, but after a bit I put up my hand to pull it away, and just as I touched it a lively snake about three feet long glided over my shoulder on to my knees. I can tell you I just jumped and cleared out! Young A——, with three more young Englishmen, arrived in San Antonio about a week ago. We have asked them to come up here for a bit to help with the clearing and fencing, but we have not had an answer yet. Probably some of them will turn up in a day or two. If they do, we shall get on like wild-fire; but it will be an awful squash, as our house is only 12 feet by 9, and at present it's filled with ploughs, boxes, &c. The next thing we are going to do is to build a store-room for them. . . . I think we shall have lots of fruit this summer, principally wild grapes, which grow in huge quantities here and are very good eating, and make very fair wine, for which you get 6s. a gallon in San Antonio.

FROM WILLY TO HIS BROTHERS.

April 8, 1879.

I have at last had the surveyor out, and located my 640 acres of land; so I have now 800 acres of my own, and on one side of me there are

PART II.
Settling.

640 acres of school land, and on the other 640 Jan. 1879
acres of State land ; so we shall have plenty of to May, 1879.
breathing room. There is over a mile of creek
on my land, which is running now, although
this is an unusually dry season. It does not run
in all parts of the creek, but every hundred
yards or so there is a long hole of running
water ; it then sinks under till it comes to the
next hole. . . . We are awfully hilly here, but
it is a good grass country. . . . The last time I
came from San Antonio I started at 2 p.m.,
stopped at Capt. T——'s an hour, and over half
an hour in B——, seeing the surveyor, and got
home at 9 p.m. Going round by T——'s made
the distance 37 miles. This was on Bet, the
mare, who is a very good riding nag. We broke
Tim's horse into the wagon with Billy yesterday.
He bucked at first, but went very well afterwards,
and didn't smash anything. I must go to bed
now, I'm so tired, and it's nearly eight. If you
fellows get tired of England, come on out, and
bring Granny with you. It's an awfully unworry-
ing life, and no weekly bills!

FROM WILLY TO THE DOCTOR.

My hut, near B—,

April 9, 1879.

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Settling.

You bet! We don't get too much literature Jan. 1879
out here to think letters are "boshy"; so scrawl ^{to} May, 1879.
away all you know, and bring yourself out if you
like. This is just the place for you if you get
seedy, as it is awfully healthy. I am just going
into town for our weekly beef, five pounds of which
will cost me twenty-five cents. We are nearly
eaten up with ticks; it's just awful; I look as if
I had the measles bad, but the hens are getting
away with a good many I think. They are little
flat red animals, about the size of a ladybird, and
live in the trees; but if they can get fresh meat
they prefer it.

FROM WILLY TO MADGE.

April 15, 1879.

... I expect my poultry yard will increase rapidly,
as I intend to make all the hens that want to sit
bring out young ones, as they are not likely to
find my 800 acres too small for them for some
time to come. I have a half-tailed rooster; the
hens pecked the other half off the first day I

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Settling.

brought him here. He was a very inferior cock where he came from, but since he has been here he has been swaggering around, and sitting on the fence, and crowing with all his might. He was the first cock I bought, and has bullied the second cock out of the yard; and the latter and his hens go into the field behind all day, and only come up at night to roost in the trees. There are deer and wild turkeys about, but we haven't seen any yet, as we have hardly left the ranche. But there are rabbits around. Tim saw four to-night, and I shot one the other night with my pistol. I saw him by the creek, so I watched him, and yelled to Tim for the pistol. I held out my hands behind my back and Tim shoved the pistol into them, saying, "Look out, it's cocked!" So I upped the pistol at that rabbit and shot him through the head, and in five minutes he and his skin had party company, the latter buried in the garden, and he hanging up outside the door; and we stewed him for breakfast, and wasn't he good, oh my! . . . I am generally cook, and turn out some fine concoctions; but G—and Tim are rapidly learning.

FROM WILLY TO HIS FATHER.

April 15, 1879.

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Settling.

We are getting along grandly. We have a fence Jan. 1879 about 40 yards by 20 round the hut, and a gate- to May, 1879. way opposite the hut that we put bars across at night to keep cows, &c., out; and we have fenced in a garden next us about the same size as the yard, and have got lettuces, tomatoes, onions, carrots, radishes, potatoes, and standard and climbing beans in, and I shall put some melons in shortly. . . . We have plenty of live stock around us of our own, not to speak of every one else's animals, which seem to prefer us to their owners. The German's cows and pigs pay us visits, also one of S——'s dogs, and his geese come and stay all day sometimes, and one of his gobblers has apparently taken up his abode here permanently. Our greatest worry is our German neighbour. He is a rummy little old man, who seems to do nothing all day but hunt for his four oxen which he turns out every night. He comes by, and asks if we have seen them, and talks for some time, and then goes after them; then, in an hour or so he comes back and talks again, after saying that he saw his boy had found the oxen, and was

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Settling.

driving them home. His boy is the only one who ever finds them, though C—— always hunts too; and how the boy finds them among these hills I don't know, unless it is by instinct, as he has done nothing but hunt those oxen all his life, I expect. We had a thunderstorm this morning for about an hour, and it poured like anything, and part of the time huge hailstones, some nearly as big as hens eggs, came down. It moistened the ground a bit, and I think I shall start some ploughing to-morrow, after I have been to B—— for mail matter, which I fetch every Sunday and Wednesday morning.

FROM COUSIN TIM.

The Log Hut,
April 20, 1879.

... I'm working outside all day, cutting down trees and clearing out roots, or ploughing; and in the evening there's just time for supper, mending my clothes, or cooking, and then turn into bed, for which I'm always ready. We all sleep on the floor, one rug over, and one under us. I've got so accustomed to the hard floor that it seems as comfortable as ever a soft mattress did. The only one I've slept on since I've been out was

PART II.
Settling.

at Capt. T——'s. . . . It's getting to be very hot Jan. 1879
now. When we're working with iron tools we ^{to} May, 1879.
have to put them in the shade, or they blister
our hands.

The Shanty,
April 27, 1879.

. . . Thank heaven the rain's come at last;
as Willy says, "oodles of it!" You can
almost hear the grass growing; and the creek's
running again for the first time since last July.
Willy's gone into San Antonio to buy some
more grub, and a wagon and horse for hauling
cedar-posts and lumber for the new fence. I've
been left in charge with a man to help me, and
have been trying to plough this morning, but the
rain prevented me from doing much, I'm sorry to
say, though I've managed to get wet to the skin
twice this morning already, and am now steaming
away before a big log fire. This hut just lets the
water in everywhere. It's worse than my tent was
at the Major's, and there it was positively dan-
gerous to go to sleep without a life-buoy, on a
rainy night! All the fowls keep coming in; it's
impossible to keep them out. If Willy doesn't
make a door soon, they'll ruin our Brussels carpet!
The beasts have already eaten all my bacon; so

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Settling.

I've got nothing to eat till Willy comes back Jan. 1879
in three days' time, but corn bread and beans. ^{to} May, 1879.

I think I'll slay the ring-leader of the bacon-eaters. It's very amusing here at night sometimes. The part of the floor where we sleep slopes in the middle. Willy and I sleep on either side, and G—— in the centre. He keeps continually rolling down on to one of us, and whoever he comes down on drives him back to the other side. I wedged him up one night with large stones on each side, but he said they weren't exactly comfortable! The Mater told me in her last that you were coming to the States this summer, and going to bring Chico and the Doctor with you. You may guess I was delighted to hear it; but don't leave those youngsters in New York; bring 'em on here. There's a sulphur spring within half-a-mile, and the Doctor can poison himself as much as he pleases!

FROM WILLY.

April 30, 1879.

... My finger does not pain me now, but puts a stop to my work. It began with inflammation, and I think I made it worse by trying to go on with the ploughing, and it turned into an abscess.

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Settling.

We have a hard-working young fellow working for us, and have got an acre of corn in, and are preparing (clearing bushes, roots, &c.) for more. G—— turned lazy, so he had to go, but I promised to let him work for his board if he hadn't found anything else in San Antonio when I went in to haul provisions. He didn't turn up, so I suppose he has got a clerkship, or something. There are some rum specimens of British subjects out here. One of them, in San Antonio, belongs to a titled family, and I think his name is in the blue-book. He hasn't a cent, and won't work, but just gets what he can out of everyone. I mentioned his name to a fellow the other day, and he said, "Oh, you know him, do you?" "Yes," I said, "I met him to-day." "Did you? How much did he get out of you?" He has a most gentlemanly face, but his light London suit is beginning to look shabby, and matches the dirty white shirt with no tie or collar, very well. He got into a scrape in England, I suppose, and got kicked out. The ticks still rage furiously. (Aunt M—— sent Tim a packet of insect powder, telling him to put it on the bed and sheets!) Tim used to fill pins with them; but as we hadn't any statistics of the number of pins in the U.S., we

PART II. gave that up; and now we crack them with our front teeth. They are harder than fleas, and won't be squashed between two nails. Our German neighbour came round raging the other day to where we were burning some bushes, and tried to prevent us, saying we would "set his lant on fire!" So we told him to go to the devil. Then there was a scene of a German in all his majestic fury. He swore, and stamped, and shouted around; but we didn't take any notice of him. He has now cooled down, and was round here yesterday as affable as usual. Tim brought a letter for me to-day, from Momo or the Doctor, I think, and it blew in the fire before I opened it. I was just going to enjoy it and my dinner together, so it was very riling. I hope there wasn't anything of very great importance in it. . . . I met old W—— in San Antonio the other day. He was in buying a pony, as he was still holding sheep outside town, and had let someone get away with his two horses and all his clothes. Since I last saw them, X—— has become bankrupt, and the great Z—— got on a royal old drunk one night, which cost him \$250. I had a long ride to San Antonio the last time. My horses were hard at work in the field, so I rode Tim's pony, and he just knew I couldn't use

Jan. 1879
to
May, 1879.

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Settling.

my right hand to lick him, and walked nearly all the way. If I dropped the bridle and took up the rope with my left hand to whack him, he'd go off at right angles to the left like lightning, so I had to catch up the bridle again, and pull him straight. I saw a very good surgeon about my finger in San Antonio; he is a Scotchman, just like the London type of doctor, and not like the man in B——, whom I should probably have addressed with "Is your master in?" if someone hadn't previously told me that "That is Dr. Blank, sir, standing in his doorway."

WILLY TO THE DOCTOR.

May 5, 1879.

. . . Tim shot a red bird the other day. The breast is brilliant scarlet, and I was going to send it you for fish flies, only it got wormy before I had time to skin it. We will shoot another soon, probably, and I'll skin him sooner. Some wild turkeys come on to the field to get the corn, but we haven't shot any yet. The pigs from the neighbouring ranches also come and root it up, and Tim says he shall sleep in the field to-night and shoot them, but I expect he'll weaken on sleeping out when it comes to the point.

FROM WILLY.

May 20, 1879.

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... Tim is now out, trying to make a contract ^{Jan. 1879} for cedar posts for fencing our thirty acres or so ^{to} May, 1879. of pasture. He started yesterday morning, and was to bring back a cow and calf if possible, so I expect the cow has been amusing herself at his expense. I have been into San Antonio two or three times lately, after shingles for roofing. The time before last I bought a horse for \$13, said to have worked in a wagon, though from the way he "worked" I should say he never had. I drove him and Ted's horse (which we've only had once or twice in a wagon), and I had just a bother with them. After I got out of Town I got them into going order, and they go splendidly now, especially my \$13 animal "Tracy"; but I had to lead them all through Town, and whenever I stopped for anything there was a circus to make them start again. I had to get a man every time to saw Tracy's front legs with a rope, and this took some minutes, by which time a small crowd would assemble to see the fun. Tim was hauling water in the wagon the other day and the axle broke, through a flaw (which of course I had mended for

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nothing), and the forty-eight gallons of water, or Jan. 1879
part of it, gave him a shower-bath. We have had ^{to} May, 1879.
no rain for some time, and every day is almost
cloudless and very hot, but there is always a cool
gulf breeze blowing. Tim found a wild turkey's
nest with eleven eggs, and I have been vainly
trying to get two hens to sit on them. I'll have
to glue them to 'em I guess. Why don't you
people pack up and come out here right away?
I am going to get a portable two-roomed hut, as
our hut is so full of tools, harness, and grub, that
there would not be room if D—— came out.
Then, if his family comes, he can have the portable
and build a kitchen off it, and Tim and I can rig
up a box. A neighbour of ours has a raised two-
roomed house, with front verandah and large stone
chimney, which cost him \$230, hauling, and build-
ing, and materials and all. . . . People out here are
mighty calm about their land. I went to a lawyer
in San Antonio, about a piece I wanted in B——,
which belonged to him. He said he'd never seen
it, and didn't know when he should be able to,
though he believed it *did* belong to him. . . . I
don't think that I shall ever smoke, as I know it
hurts one's ability to think to a certain extent,
and is also a beastly waste of time. . . . Rasp-

PART II. berries, currants, gooseberries, and strawberries are Jan. 1879
 Settling. almost unheard of here. Think what a sensation ^{to} May, 1879.
 we shall make when we raise them! I suppose, even if D— hasn't started yet, it would be impossible to send a plant or two of each at this time of year for cuttings? . . . Yes, I think Texas horses and ponies are stronger than English ones. They generally run wild till four or five years old, so get plenty of exercise. I expect Tim every minute with a cow. I hope she gives four quarts. This is about the maximum at a milking here. Some only give one quart. I have no pigs yet, as they grub up so. Our neighbours' pigs are quite nuisance enough.

FROM COUSIN TIM.

Saturday, some time in May, 1879.

I made a great effort to write last Sunday, but it was so intensely hot indoors that my ideas seemed to melt away. It's a curious thing, that as long as I am out of doors I can do any sort of work, and don't mind the heat a bit, but the instant I get inside I'm fit for nothing. Willy, I'm sorry to say, has had a very bad abscess on his little finger for the last three weeks, and has

PART II.
Settling.

been able to do no work except cooking, so I've Jan. 1879
 been pretty busy. We have now got a nice long ^{to} May, 1879.
 straight field of about four acres cleared and
 ploughed. Part of it was also planted with corn
 and melons, but the wild turkeys ate them all up.
 I dusted one gobbler's jacket with a couple of
 charges of buck shot, but they've been coming to
 it all the same nearly every day since. We are
 not going to plant it again with corn. I wish we
 had some cabbages ready now, they are worth 1s.
 each at San Antonio, and more still at B—. I
 expect I shall commence cutting cedar posts
 next week, for the fence. The cedar brake is
 about fifteen miles from here, so I think I shall
 have to camp there for one night each load. We
 shall, by cutting and hauling ourselves, save three
 and a-half cents a post, which will make a great
 difference in a two-mile fence. I intend some
 time this year to take a few wagon loads to San
 Antonio. You can always get \$10 a hundred for
 them there, and sometimes \$12, and as it only
 costs \$1 for the privilege of cutting them, it's
 pretty good pay for your three days' work. I
 dare say you will have wondered what the en-
 closure was. It's a rattlesnake's rattle, that I shot
 a few days ago. He was making such a row that

PART II. I heard him a long way off, and came up and Jan. 1879
 Settling. killed him. He was only about four feet long, but ^{to} May, 1879.
 was as thick as your arm. The chicken snakes
 are the greatest nuisance of all. They don't leave
 us a single egg. One of them ate seventeen out
 of a nest one day, and the same brute ate ten
 turkey's eggs that the old hen was sitting on. I
 will poison an egg or two for them. If I don't we
 shall never see the ghost of a chicken.

FROM WILLY.

May 26, 1879.

. . . I think Chico and the Dr. had better come
 straight here, as we have lots for them to help us
 in. The water in the creek runs through and over
 rock and gravel, and is splendid. It is the water
 down South, below San Antonio, that is so bad.
 I don't think I tasted any really good water all
 that trip. I went to see Capt. T—— yesterday,
 and while I was there one of the ewes dropped a
 lamb. This is the first. The Captain sings out,
 "Hulloa, Willy! there's another hundred dol-
 lars." I have made some pretty good stock pur-
 chases lately. I ride about and hear where there
 are animals I want, for sale cheap. Yesterday I

PART II.
Settling.

bought three milch cows (one with a three week old calf) for \$30. This is the stock that pays here, and small settlers *won't* sell a cow except at a high figure, until they are hard up, which occurs pretty often, then they come down to a reasonable figure. . . . The other day we had such a hunt after those cussed horses. We were three days after them about the country, as they had a wild fit, that is, Billy and Tracy had. At last Tim got them into a high pen the other side of B—, but Billy cleared the gate and Tracy tried to follow, only Tim had hold of his rope. At last we got them here, and now they go about crestfallen, with hobbles round their forelegs, the beggars!

WILLY TO THE DOCTOR.

May 26, 1879.

. . . Horse-doctoring isn't of much use here. They never seem to be ill. The only ailing out of the thousands I have seen was a swollen nose, which was cured by lancing. If a horse does get ill, it's ten to one it's a \$15 one, and the owner wouldn't pay 50 cts. to cure it. Now *sheep* doctoring *would* be useful. They very often die for want of proper care and knowledge, and raisers

PART II. are not nearly careful enough with them. . . . Bring Jan. 1879
 Settling. a few shirts and socks, and as *little else* as possible. ^{to} May, 1879.
 Beware of sharpers on trains and at stations. Go
 to the Central Hotel in San Antonio. Let me
 know when you expect to arrive in San Antonio,
 and I will meet you with wagon; or wire from
 thence to B—— (cost 25 c.) We've plenty of
 horses for you. Finger still bad. Dr. in B——
 said I should lose it if I wasn't careful.

FROM WILLY.

May 30, 1879.

. . . Just off with wagon and two yoke of steers
 to fetch the four ewes. The lamb was premature
 rather, and died. I had six or seven attempts to
 get our first \$11 cow and calf here, and at last
 had to haul her in the wagon. Will I take a
 pupil? why, yes: and the fee, \$300 per ann., if
 he's a hanger on. If he'll work, and take an in-
 terest in what he does, he may stop as long as he
 likes for nothing! Will you get the following book
 for me—"The Book of the Farm; detailing the
 labours, &c. By H. F. Stephens, F.R.S.E. W.
 Blackwood and Sons, 1871." I will pay for it
 when you come out. . . .

PART II. TO THE DOCTOR—
Settling.

Jan. 1879

to

May, 1879.

I wish you would bring out my "Enquire within upon Everything" book. It's in my room. Also, if you have time to get them made, a one pound and a half-pound butter print, with a "fleur-de-lis" on them. Get Chico to draw it carefully on paper, as the man will want a good copy. This is my brand. I'll pay you for the prints when you come out. Bring comb, brush, tooth-brush, and sponge, of course, and look in my chest of drawers and bring all the light evening neck-chokers, if any. They are very useful in the sun. I mean those things you wear when on your way to a party at night. You'd better bring the worn-outest old coat you've got, with the old trowsers, on board ship, as salt water spoils clothes awful.

PART III.

WILLY'S AND THE DOCTOR'S
LETTERS.



STRIKING ROOTS.



INTRODUCTORY.

PART III. EARLY in the spring of 1879 I had determined to go Dec. 1879
to the United States, and, before settling in business in New York, visit Willy at his ranche. The Doctor's eyes had ^{to} May, 1880.
Striking roots.
given way from work by gas-light, and he had had to give up his Scholarship, and was to go to his brother for a year's fallow before studying medicine in New York or Philadelphia. Chico was to go with us on a three months' visit to the ranche, but as the Doctor and myself could not start for America till the 4th July; and as we were all anxious about Willy's hand, he preceded us, and went to the ranche by land from New York. We followed in July, and with us Cousin Dick, Tim's elder brother, and a young friend, Lennie Windale, both of them intending to settle in Texas. We went steerage, *viâ* New York to Galveston, where we met Tim on his way back to Ireland to join another brother there, and go with him to New Zealand. He brought a better account of Willy's hand, and told us of Chico's arrival at the ranche in good case. So we saw him off by the steamer which had brought us to Galveston, and then went on to San Antonio, where we were met by Willy, who drove us up to the ranche in his wagon. There we had a "real good time," and bore a hand at fence-making, well-digging, and whatever other work was going on. Dick, who was a good horseman, took

PART III. to breaking in ponies on the ranche, and towards the end Dec. 1879
 Striking of October, when I was returning to my work in New ^{to} May, 1880.
 roots. York, took up a car-load of them to sell there, and, as
 will be seen, returned to the ranche in the following
 February to break in and take up another car-load. After
 that he settled in New York. Chico returned to his art-
 work in London in November, leaving Willy, the Doctor,
 and Lennie at the ranche. While we were at the ranche,
 Willy bought a flock of 200 ewes of the country, to cross
 with the Oxfordshire Downs, the chief care of which was
 undertaken by the Doctor.—W. H.

FROM WILLY TO HIS GRANDMOTHER.

.... Ranche,

Dec. 31, 1879.

. . . . I think it will be pleasanter for you to
 have a temporary wooden house on the ranche
 till your other house is built. These wooden
 houses can be made exceedingly comfortable.
 An Englishman near here has one which cost
 altogether £60, building and everything. . . .
 We are having lovely weather. Last night I
 slept out on a balcony with only a wagon sheet
 over me, and to-night I am in my shirt sleeves
 with my shirt open, sitting by an open door
 and window, with a warm South wind blowing

PART III. Striking roots. hard at me. If it wasn't for the wind it would be unpleasantly hot. . . . We feed our calves on cotton seed and sometimes when I go through the pasture I have a string of twenty or so after me, expecting to be fed. We salt our sheep every night, and it is very amusing. I have been thrown off my legs several times by them, as a hundred and fifty of them charge me if I don't fill their troughs quick enough! Dec. 1879
to
May, 1880.

FROM THE DOCTOR.

. . . . Ranche,
Jan. 8, 1880.

. . . . I know a great many of the ewes by name now, and expect I shall have got names for nearly all before next Spring. There is Bertram, a dark scowling sheep (Rokeby); Traddles, a skeleton of a sheep (Copperfield); Joe, a fat barrel of one (Pickwick); and Godiva is very long-woolled, Bulldog is underhung, Jerky has had a broken leg, &c., &c.

FROM WILLY.

. . . . Ranche,

Jan. 8, 1880.

PART III.
Striking
roots.. . . . We have just had a tremendous rain, Dec. 1879
and our $2\frac{1}{2}$ acres of oats are coming up well. ^{to} May, 1880.

The roads between this and San Antonio are black land for the most part, and they got as sticky as "butter-scotch." I passed the stage-coach as I went down. It had clogged up with mud, and luckily had only three passengers, all men, who were in their shirt sleeves out on the road with sticks, knocking the mud from between the spokes, as the coach couldn't move! I have not planted out the fruit trees, as I shall leave them for you to say where they are to be put. . . . The rain has put water into the creek, and the frogs make a tremendous noise all night, squealing. I have a muff of a Texan working for me. He's been hunting for my two work-oxen for two days now, and hasn't returned. Just fancy having to hunt one's cattle for miles and miles round! It takes more time than anything else almost. . . . We had a plum-pudding on Christmas-Day. The Doctor made it. It was a great success, and we bought some whiskey

PART III. and set the pudding alight in good old style. Dec. 1879
 Striking We didn't do any decorating, as we hadn't any ^{to} May, 1880.
 roots. holly, and mistletoe would have been out of
 place among such a lot of old bachelors as we
 are.

The Ranche,

Jan. 19, 1880.

. . . We are awfully busy now ploughing up the field. It is exceedingly rich, and we turn furrow after furrow without turning up a single stone. There are about ten acres which we haven't got to clear at all, and after ploughing I shall begin fencing, to begin to put in cotton in Spring. We plough with six oxen. I plough, and another man drives. Sometimes we come upon a root, and all the chains crink as the oxen strain on them, but they generally burst it. The field is a mile and a-quarter from here, and it seems a long walk coming back at night after ploughing all day. . . . I sold nearly half my sheep the other day. They were a lot of sixty that I bought first. I bought a lot of a hundred afterwards that suited me better (I got 8s. per head for them, and paid 7s. per head when I bought them); so now I have only the hundred ewes left, and they are doing very well. . . We have decorated our hut with pictures from

PART III. "The Illustrated," &c., and with a huge map of Dec. 1879
 Striking roots. America. I believe we know every name on the ^{to} May, 1880.
 latter almost, as it's just at the head of the table,
 and we study it at supper time. . . .

The Ranche,

Feb. 3, 1880.

. . . What a dreadful accident that Tay Bridge seems to have been. We have just had a few days cold weather, the first since Christmas, but I think it is blowing off again now. . . . We have been feasting lately on a sort of gourd, which some of the farmers grow here. They are very good eating, are as large as one's head, with a thin neck. I hope to grow a good many this year. They are very easily raised, and keep through the winter. We had to stop ploughing for a few days, owing to the "Norther," but we are going at it again now for some days. . . .

FROM THE DOCTOR.

The Ranche,

Feb. 6, 1880.

. . . I went down to San Antonio on Gipsy last week, and spent nearly a day and a-half there, but

PART III. didn't enjoy myself so much as I might have done, Dec. 1879
Striking as I had to see the dentist. He lives over a cigar ^{to} May, 1880.
roots. shop, where two lawyers had a duel the other day.
They emptied their revolvers at one another, and
both were slightly wounded; so they were fined
\$5 a-piece! We have just had the longest spell of
cold weather that there has been this winter, and
it has just been bowling stock over like ninepins.
However, it is an ill wind that blows no one any
good—the buzzards have got so fat they can hardly
fly. . . . I thought before I came out here, that
black-woolled sheep belonged only to nursery
rhymes, but we have got a black lamb in the flock
now, which is coal-black all over (tongue and all),
except the tip of it's tail. We have just got the
paper with the pictures of Portia and Shylock in it,
and Willy has pasted them up, one on each side
of a young lady, who has a cannon fired off on her
back in a circus. We have just got a collie dog
for the sheep, and I have got to train it, but I
expect I shall have rather a tough job, as it is
rather frightened of the sheep. . . . We have got
some wild flowers out already here and there. . . .

FROM WILLY.

The Ranche,

Feb. 15, 1880.

PART III.
Striking
roots.

... We have been working like steam engines lately, and things couldn't be going better to my mind than at present. Our general mode of proceeding for the past month has been as follows: The Doctor takes sole care of the sheep, and a better shepherd I couldn't have if I went all over the world. The sheep look splendidly. An Englishman, at whose ranche, south of San Antonio, I stayed last year, visited us this day week on his way to his ranche, after a visit to England, and he said he only wished he could find his sheep looking as well as ours when he got to the ranche. Windale is housekeeper, and looks after the horses, and cows, and calves. To-day I have turned out of the pasture, with their mothers, the last seven or eight calves; so now we shan't have any milk at all. We have two young bulls still in the pasture, and these we feed regularly, with the two English rams. The four English ewes run outside the pasture, and all are doing first-rate. I have been working on the big field. For the last few days we have been seven strong. I plough, and

Dec. 1879

to

May, 1880.

PART III. another man drives the steers, two men grubbing Dec. 1879
 Striking out the bushes that are in the way, another man to
 roots. getting up stones for the rock fence, and two more May, 1880.
 cutting wood on contract. The land is in places
 very heavily timbered with live oak. I pay a man
 4s. per cord for cutting up the wood, and I am
 going to cart it into B——, where I can get 9s.
 for it. The wood does not hurt for keeping, so
 I am having it stacked up in cords to keep, as,
 if this year turns out well, wood will probably be
 again worth 10s. and 11s. per cord; but I am
 having it cut now, as labour is cheap. Of course,
 if the wood becomes worth 10s. again, cutting it
 will, with everything else, “go up,” and probably
 cost 6s. or 7s. We have been camping on the
 field. At the beginning of the week we put two
 yoke of steers to the wagon containing provisions,
 tools, &c., and one yoke to the water-cart (which
 holds 96 gallons), and march up to the field; then
 on Saturday night we come down again. Some-
 times some of the “boys” from neighbouring
 ranches come up to the camp at night, and
 have games and wrestling, and play jokes on
 one another.

On Friday night they took a green hand
 out “quail hunting.” They all went into the

PART III.
Striking
roots.

brush, about half-a-mile from camp, down the creek, and set him at the end of a trail or cattle-path, with an empty sack, which he had to keep open in front of him, to catch the quail which they were going to drive up the trail into it. After sundry questions from him, as to whether they would bite, what size and color they were, &c., they came back along the trail to "drive the quail"; which consists of going back to the camp fire and waiting till the fellow with the sack has had enough of waiting. In half-an-hour or so the sackman was heard on the top of a neighbouring hill, about a mile from camp. From there he saw the camp fire, and struck out for it.

Another game is "donkey-riding."—Two fellows are tied back to back, and a saddle is put on them and girthed, and then another fellow gets on the saddle, and they pitch and pitch until they pitch him off.

Then there is "leg-wrestling."—Two fellows lie on their backs next each other, but the feet of one at the head of the other; and each clutches the other one's shoulder with his inside hand; then each lifts up his inside leg three times while they count, and the third time they lock their

Dec. 1879
to
May, 1880.

PART III. legs, and one of them turns a sudden somersault Dec. 1879
 Striking backwards, and he is conquered¹. It is generally a ^{to} May, 1880.
 roots. very short combat unless they are evenly matched ;
 but one or the other, anyhow, ends in going heels
 over head backwards.

I have opened the seeds, which are beautifully packed. Many thanks for them. The grass seeds I shall put in a spot in the pasture, but I hardly like to venture with the garden seeds, as my cotton field will take up all my time. Windale has the comfrees in hand, and is preparing beds for them. With regard to silkworms ; there are quantities of wild mulberries here, but it will be a long time before I can do anything in that line, I think, as there are such numberless paying things more immediately connected with the general ranche business. . . . We have every prospect of unusually good prices for our wool this year.

FROM THE DOCTOR.

The Ranche,

Feb. 25, 1880.

. . . Dick arrived to-day, having lost his traps, watch, and ulster by the way ; but he looks very

¹ I am bound to say, though used to such matters from my youth up, that 'leg wrestling' puzzles me.—ED.

PART III.
Striking
roots.

well, and hopes that he will get the former back. Dec. 1879
I am as well as I can be, for herding agrees with me, and exercises me pretty regularly, too, if a pair of soles a month may be taken as evidence. to
May, 1880.
. . . The sheep are rapidly recovering from the effects of the winter, and are beginning to look quite fat. There are two ewe lambs and a buck already, two of them Cotswolds, and one (I believe) an Oxford Down. There is plenty of water all down the creek, so I haven't to travel the sheep at all for it. One pool is so big that you can, if you try, swim six yards without touching bottom. . . . Your well¹ hasn't hauled dry since the rain; but it was all but giving out last autumn for want of cleaning.

FROM THE DOCTOR TO MADGE.

The Ranche,

March 1, 1880.

The 29th has passed, and I haven't been proposed to, so I feel my vanity very much injured. . . . Dick arrived last Wednesday. He and Willy have done no end of gardening to-day, putting in potatoes, seeds, &c. . . . I am keeping a sort of diary now, but I am afraid it wouldn't interest

¹ My brother dug a well on his visit to the ranche.—ED.

PART III. you much, as it is almost entirely taken up with Dec. 1879
 Striking notes on stock, such as, "Herded on right-hand to
 roots. hills—found Smike's lamb—saw a brown heifer, May, 1880.
 brand CHK—Poke brought bull over," &c., &c. . .

FROM THE DOCTOR.

March 18, 1880.

. . . There are thirty lambs now ; and they give me a nice job hunting them up every day ; for they lie down all day under the bushes, and whenever the flock moves away, I have to go round all the bushes and rout them out. I am quite a dab now at judging the time of day without the sun, for sometimes I don't see his face from the time I leave the pen till when I come back ; but I am seldom a quarter-of-an-hour wrong. I suppose it is from practice, for I never used to know the time in England. Dick has nearly got a carload of horses, almost all of which are "broken," and running in Capt. T——'s pasture ; but a few are only "badly cracked," and are up at the ranche still. The rock fence round the new land is being fast built, as there are over six men at work on it, I believe, quarrying, hauling, and building. . . .

FROM WILLY TO HIS FATHER.

The Ranche,

March 21, 1880.

PART III.
Striking
roots.

Dick will, as you propose, start for New York Dec. 1879
 about the 22nd proximo. We've got all the horses ^{to} May, 1880.
 now, including one racer, a mare, from D——'s. . . .
 To come to an important question straight. I
 asked the Doctor the other day how he liked this
 life, and whether he would like to stop, and go
 halves in the whole concern, and he evidently
 thinks it would be just the thing he would like.
 He said, "Well, up to the present this life has been
 exceedingly fascinating, but of course I must ask
 father before giving any answer; and I think I
 would rather wait till I see him, if you don't mind,
 instead of writing about it." I fancy from the
 interest he takes in everything, that it would suit
 him internally and ex-ditto better than sweating
 in a city; and as to his health, it couldn't be
 better. I can't palaver like K—— and Co., but
 those are the main facts, and we can study the
 question further when you are down here. On the
 29th inst. I shall have been here a year, and I
 fancy a small change may be noticed, if one looks
 closely enough. By the way, Dick says that

PART III. M^cN—— used to can tomatoes in Virginia very simply, but used to keep it dark, and make good cash at it. If you know anyone in a canning business, could you get the main points, as to the length of time boiling, whether put into cans hot or cold, and whether they get all air-tight before soldering the last hole, &c. I hope Dick makes a good thing of the horse business this time; if so, I'm going to invest in a few promising young horses, to hold till they mature. . . .

The Ranche,

March 28, 1880.

. . . All the horses are doing well; Dick says they are a much better lot than last. Windale is becoming a very good rider; he has plenty of pluck. On the 22nd inst. we began to break a big four-year-old horse. He broke easily, and Windale rode into B—— for mail on him on the 26th. Coming out, his love of news got the better of his discretion, so, dropping the reins on the neck of the mustang of five days' riding, he took out the Illustrated, and began reading; and so off went the horse pitching *à la mode* with head down, and over his head went Master Windale. He followed him for a mile or so, and caught him, but led him

PART III.
Striking
roots.

back! He "went for" that horse, though, on re- Dec. 1879
turning. He put a "bucking stick" on the saddle, May, 1880.
and got on and raced round the field, and the horse
couldn't get him off again. The bucking stick is
about two feet long, and tied across the horn of
the saddle, just above your legs, and it's next to
impossible for a horse to buck you out. . . .

FROM THE DOCTOR TO MADGE.

March 31, 1880.

. . . . I had a regular spree on my birthday;
for Willy took the sheep for a day and a half
on purpose that I should. Dick and I started
for the Guadalupe at 3 p.m. on Saturday on
horseback, and we just reached it by sun-down,
and camped out: all Sunday we were fishing,
and camped out again, and started at about 1 a.m.
on Monday, and reached home before sun-up.
Since then we have had two very moist days,
which have done the grass a heap of good, but
which I can't say I appreciate as I ought, for
they don't make *me* grow however wet I get.
I never catch cold though, so I don't mind them
much. . . . We have got sixty lambs in the flock
now, and shall probably have nearly eighty, which

PART III.
Striking
roots.

is a very good percentage. When Dick and I were fishing we caught some cat-fish, perch, and something else, and we had only one rod and reel between us. . . . Birds haven't begun to build yet, but I expect they will as soon as the foliage gets a bit thicker. I am soon going to preempt eighty acres. . . .

Dec. 1879
to
May, 1880.

FROM THE DOCTOR TO HIS GRANDMOTHER.

April 14, 1880.

. . . . I have begun leaving the flock, and during the day am engaged digging rock for a stone pen, but at present I have to go up once a day to see that the sheep are all right, and it splits my work up very much. By the way, I received quite an insult from a man yesterday. He told me he "didn't do much herding — *he* was always *at* work!" Happily for him he is only half-witted, or I might have slaughtered him! . . . I thought I had found a nice scorpion to send home, but it was unfortunately alive, so I squashed it. Dick has commenced shearing, but the shears gave out after the first ewe, so we are going to get a new pair to-morrow.

April 23, 1880.

PART III.
Striking
roots.

The sheep herd themselves now, and when I go after them I nearly always find them in a bunch facing homewards; so I hope that soon it will not be necessary to bring them home at all. . . . I have forgotten some of my sheep since they have been shorn, but I remember most of them in spite of their scare-crowish appearance. . . . Wool has risen immensely this year (over 10 cents a pound), and the sheep will probably shear $2\frac{1}{4}$ lbs. all round at least. There are over seventy lambs now, but I have lost count, and can't pick it up again, for you might as well try to count a flight of birds as a bunch of lambs. . . .

FROM WILLY.

The Ranche,

April 25, 1880.

. . . Dick left for New York a week ago with the horses. There were twenty-one splendid little animals. Most of them he tamed here himself. We have been shearing at odd intervals lately, and have only about thirty more to shear. The main work has been on the cotton-field. We are now preparing for planting. . . . Two of the English ewes have lambed twins, a third has

PART III.
Striking
roots.

lambed one, and a fourth will lamb shortly, I think. . . . To-day, as we were ploughing, a swarm of bees flew across the field and came all round the Doctor and myself. I thought they were going to settle on us, but they buzzed around and then went off. I followed them, but couldn't keep up with them. . . . This spring seems entirely different from the last one, which was so unusually dry. Now everything looks green and nice. A lot of humming birds are up in the valley behind the field, but I have never seen their nests. They feed on the honey-suckle. I never saw any live ones before this spring.

TO THE EDITOR.

The Rancho,
May 1, 1880.

Dear Uncle,

As there is such a thing as scab amongst sheep here, and it is pretty common, I didn't like to whistle till I was out of the wood, and so didn't write about the favorable condition of the flock before. I'm now glad to be able to tell you that our sheep are perfectly healthy, and doing well. We are nearly through with shearing, and in a few days I hope to take the wool down to San Antonio. Our lambs, which are from the

Dec. 1879
to
May, 1880.

PART III. English rams, are unusually fine, and as the climate Dec. 1879
 Striking seems to suit the thoroughbreds admirably, and as to
 roots. May, 1880.

they grow much heavier fleeces, and the wool is as valuable as that which is at present grown in the country, I have decided to go on with the breed, and hope to make a big thing of it. I have had several applications for half-bred rams, and I hope to be able to sell a few next tuppung season. . . . I started without experience, and without anyone to give me any very reliable advice. As it was, of course I made a few mistakes at starting; though now I feel as if I'd been in the business all my life. . . . I am going to divide my business here into different departments. The Doctor is, and has been, boss of sheep department. Windale is starting a market-garden, in which he is to have shares. I am going to take the farming department on the Schultz land, which is the best and prettiest piece of land round here. This, with superintending the other departments, will take up all my time. I am, *pro tem.* (and it may lead to be permanent), in the horse business with Dick, who has just gone up to New York with a carload of horses, which he has been breaking at the ranche, since he returned from taking up the last carload. . . . It is a profitable business if carefully attended to.

PART III.
Striking
roots.

Do you know of one or two fellows with ^{Dec. 1879} £250 or so between them, who would like to ^{to} May, 1880, go into the stock business here, in a small way? As I said, I want to take up farming properly; and, if I could get some fellows to run cattle here, would give up this ranche and range, and put up another shanty for the Doctor, Windale, and myself, on the Schultz field. There is a good shanty here, including bed-room, kitchen, and store-room, with large bins, &c., a fifty-acre pasture, and a field in which to raise horse feed, vegetables for own consumption, &c., and a *good well*. I have invested about \$1100 in the whole place, including range of 1440 acres; and I want some one to put about the same amount into stock (about 100 odd head), of cows with calves, and heifers, I taking a quarter of the increase, and he doing the main work of attending to the stock. Yearling heifers, which as a rule begin calving at three years old, cost \$5; two-year-olds \$7 50 cents; three-year-olds (without calves) \$9; and young cows (with calves) \$12 to \$14. There is always a ready sale for yearling oxen at \$5 50 cents (this year as high as \$6 has been paid), and when a cow gets old, she is allowed to fatten, and fetches \$10 to \$12; and as we are near a town, there is always a market

PART III.
Striking
roots.

for such. It is a very good opening for a couple of fellows who *mean business*. I said £250 or so, as this would be the smallest it would be worth any one's while to invest with any expectation of good returns; but there is plenty of room here for stock, if the amount invested were twice the size, or even larger; as, besides my own range, there are over 6400 acres held by the State at half-a-dollar per acre, for the School funds, and this land will not be sold for many years to come.

Dec. 1879
to
May, 1880.

THE DOCTOR TO MADGE.

May 2, 1880.

. . . We have been planting cotton, and I have been helping plough the furrows for planting in. But I was hunting sheep all Tuesday, as they got away on Monday night, and yesterday and to-day I have been shearing. I got through six to-day, but it was quite as much as I could do, as I was shearing hard for about six hours without a break, except to catch the sheep and fold the fleeces. The cotton is all planted at last, and the rock fence nearly completed. . . . I tried to hunt Gipsy up the other day on my new mare, but she and the pony she is running with were too wild, and I had

PART III. to give in. I like my new mare better every day, Dec. 1879
 Striking as she is so gentle and willing, and stops round so ^{to} May, 1880.
 roots. well. All I have to do when I want her, is to go
 out of the house and listen for her bell; then go up
 and hook my belt into her bell-strap, climb up, and
 ride home. With other horses, you have first to
 search a long while, and then put a rope round
 their necks, and lead them or drive them. . . .
 There are just crowds of wild flowers out all over
 the hills, which look better than many cultivated
 ones in a garden; especially some white ones with
 five petals, which grow quite thick. I want to get
 some clothes mended to-night, as we are going
 surveying to-morrow.

FROM THE DOCTOR.

May 15, 1880.

. . . I can do a good lot of work during the day
 now, as I have 8½ hours to leave the sheep in.
 I have just finished shearing the four Oxford
 Down ewes, and they are so strong that when
 they kick it takes two of us to hold them. The
 sheep are almost entirely in my hands now, so
 I begin to feel myself growing heavier, though
 whether it is from responsibility or extra flesh
 I can't say. Willy is breaking up some more

PART III.
Striking
roots.

land, to plant sugar-cane in, so that we may grow our own molasses this year. I believe the real reason we appreciate "treacle" so much more here than in England is, that here we have no butter or jam, and very little sugar, and it acts for all three. . . . It is extraordinary how much time some people find on their hands out here, for I cannot remember a day (except Sundays) for ever so long, that there was not something to be done, which had been kept waiting too long already. At present, I have got fully two months' work cut out for me; for there are still sixteen sheep to shear, the pen to quarry and build, the pit for the dipping vat to dig, the mare to hunt up, &c., &c.; but the more the better, as I never do more than enough in a day, and don't have to worry my head to keep my hands employed. The five thoroughbred Oxford Down lambs are going on well, and growing fast, and the black lamb is so big that I put the bell on him this evening.

Dec. 1879
to
May, 1880.

FROM WILLY.

Same date.

I would rather not have any books out yet, as they would get so dirty in our hut. As soon as I can afford to put up a small house I should very

PART III. much like to have the books out ; but I don't want Dec. 1879
Striking to
roots. get them spoilt before that. May, 1880.

FROM WILLY TO MADGE.

San Antonio,
Col. L——, his office,
May 25, 1880.

Col. L—— wants to know if you don't think the enclosed¹ is a good likeness of me ! You want a photo of me, so I let him send it, especially as he says he'll pay the postage, and so make me one letter ahead. Col. L—— says he wants you to let him know if it is like me as I was when I left England. I think you will agree with me that it exactly resembles the photo I had taken just before I left !

FROM WILLY TO HIS GRANDMOTHER.

The Ranche,
May 27, 1880.

I am so glad to see by the heading of your letter that you are away from smoky London for a bit, and to hear that you are going down to L—— this summer. . . . Many thanks for your

¹ A caricature of Col. L——'s, showing the change effected in personal appearance by twenty months of ranche life.

PART III. good wishes, apropos of my coming of age. Father Dec. 1879
 Striking won't be here on the 29th, his birthday, as the ^{to} May, 1880.
 roots. horses are not all sold; but I expect him and
 Dick early in June. Everything here is flourish-
 ing. I have just returned from San Antonio,
 where I have been with my wool. I have stored
 it there, to sell in a week or two, when I expect
 prices will be higher. All the crops are coming on
 splendidly, and everything promises to be exactly
 the reverse of last year. . . . Our bees are working
 like anything. My best hive is a box about twenty-
 eight inches high by fourteen inches square, and the
 upper six inches inside has a floor with two holes
 in it, and above each hole is a super. The two
 exactly fill the top of the hive above the floor, and
 have glass windows, as also has the lower part of
 the hive, so one can see the bees working. Both
 supers are filled with comb already, and are being
 filled with honey very fast. Bees are very plenti-
 ful out here, in hollow trees and holes in bluffs;
 and the farmers' sons are very fond of cutting
 them out and hiving them, when they find them.
 This year they will do splendidly, but last year
 the extraordinary drought killed nearly all the
 hived bees. One neighbour of ours had thirty-six
 hives, and all were killed but four! . . . You can't

PART III. conceive the quantity of wool there is now in San Antonio. All the storehouses are almost crammed full, and the marketplaces are daily full of wagon loads just arrived; and the roads into town are lined with wagons-full. My love to Madge, and ask her if she got that photo. which Col. L—— (Jem's friend) of San Antonio gave me. He is always fond of his "little joke," and is a very jolly fellow. I hope Chico managed to get a few days at L—— with you.

Dec. 1879
to
May, 1880.

Striking
roots.

P.S. Many thanks for "Good Words," which come regularly, and are very welcome.

FROM THE DOCTOR TO MADGE.

.... Ranche,
May 28, 1880.

... Yesterday was very hot, and everything was quite dry; but last night we had a "little shower," which had a rather curious effect; for at 8 a.m. this morning the pump by the creek was disconnected from both banks, a barrel and tub were half-way to B——, and the water-wagon was careering gaily down the stream, while a nice little rivulet trickled out at our front door. This is the heaviest fall of rain there has been since Willy came out.

May 30, 1880.

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Striking
roots.

We had another good shower last night, and the creek is still running hard, though the water is very shallow in most places. I bathed in the deep pool to-day, and had a splendid dive and swim, as the water in one place is half-way up my chest, and all the weeds that used to grow on the bottom have been torn away. Our tub was heard of to-day, about six miles down the creek, but we don't know where the barrel is yet. I saw Gypsy the other day, running with a bunch of mares. She has got her winter coat off, and looks in very good condition; so as soon as possible I will get her up and give my sorrel mare (Polly) a rest, of which she stands rather in need. Our best cow, Gruble, has calved again, so we have plenty of milk for coffee, &c., though of course none to skim.

Dec. 1879
to
May, 1880.

PART IV.

WILLY'S AND THE DOCTOR'S
LETTERS.



GAINING GROUND.

INTRODUCTORY.

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I WAS unable to leave my New York business for the proposed trip with Dick to the ranche, and he found work in New York, which he preferred to breaking and "shipping" mustangs. In August, 1880, important business took me to Tennessee, and detained me there most of the time for more than a year. In June it had been settled by correspondence that the Dr. should stick to the ranche, instead of coming up to New York to study medicine. In December, 1880, Willy came at my desire to prospect in Tennessee, but found that part of it which he saw unsuited for sheep-raising, which branch of his business had gradually become by far the most important. He had given up the plan of starting a store for the sale of vegetables in B—, and had found some other plans, referred to in his early letters, also impracticable. Here I ought to mention that the letters do not show the main troubles and disappointments met with, such as the failure of the cotton crop, death of thoroughbred lambs, &c., all of which were kept to themselves by the boys, lest they (the letters) should give a gloomier impression of life and prospects in that part of Texas than would be justified by facts. The letters were all written to near relatives of the boys, who were of course anxious about them, and

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Dec. 1881.

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it was natural therefore that they should make light of whatever might from time to time be troubling them. In making the extracts I have purposely omitted anything referring to the "profit and loss account," my object being to retain only such parts as show what everyday life is like on a ranche in Texas, such as theirs; but it will be sufficiently apparent that they have in the main "got on."—W. H.

Feb. to
Dec. 1881.

THE DOCTOR TO HIS FATHER IN TENNESSEE.

The Ranche,

Feb. 18, 1881.

. . . I don't know whether Willy is likely to go up again to Tennessee to prospect, even if we do sell the ranche, as he seems to think he has seen all the different kinds of land. . . . We have had very little bad weather for a long time now, and have not lost any of the new flock yet, but it has been touch-and-go with a couple of them. One got upside down for twenty-four hours, but is recovering, though she is as weak as water. Another got a severe attack of constipation, and I was hunting her till 10.30 p.m. last Wednesday, in the rain, but couldn't find her, as she was two miles from the pen, and it was impossible to see more than fifty yards; but we got her home yesterday,

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and I think she will recover, as she managed to eat some solid food this morning. Willy has bought a lot of hay in case we should have any severe northers; for "experientia docet," we lost half a-dozen lambs at least last year, through having to turn out the flock in a severe norther. The buck lamb, born before Christmas, has already grown horns an inch and a-half in length! Don't you pity his mother? We had one ewe which allowed another lamb besides her own to suck her, and, in consequence, her own lamb nearly died of starvation before we found out what was the matter; but the little beggar has picked up since, and has a belly like a balloon. That darkie Jeff is still herding, as our Mexican isn't back yet, and he (Jeff) lost himself in the hills yesterday, and didn't get back till an hour after sun-down, and I had to count the sheep by the light of a lamp, as it was pitch dark. We found a dead deer the other day, in the big hole by the Schultz field. It had died of starvation, as it was impossible for anything to climb out, if it once has the misfortune to get in. I nearly slipped into the hole once, while trying to get an old toad out on the end of a stick.

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Dec. 1881.

Feb. 23, 1881.

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. . . You must keep that newspaper in swing, as I've got a bet on the June number, which Willy says will never appear. Such is my faith in your resources that I have bet my colt against Fox, that the paper will continue to flourish for four more months!!! *Now* you can't say there's no veneration in your family! How are you getting along though really? Shall you be able to give us a sight of your blessed old face this Spring, or is . . . ? The lambs will be dropping next week, so this is probably my last letter for a good long while. One of our ewes has a bag as big as a cow's (no humbug), and I expect we shall be able to rear two or three lambs on her if necessary, as she is very gentle. I have had rather a long ride to-day, and have already written one long letter, so excuse this half sheet.

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WILLY TO HIS FATHER IN TENNESSEE.

The Ranche,

Feb. 23, 1881.

Dear old Gov.

We are having the most glorious weather imaginable, in our shirt-sleeves from

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before sunrise to when we go to bed ; but during the day a delicious south wind. The new grass has started up three inches, and Spring has evidently set in for good, bar occasional frost probably. Our oats are doing well, and we set out several fruit-trees the other day, and all our early vegetable seeds are in. The comfrees are doing splendidly, and we are going to plant out a pretty big patch. Sheep are all doing first-rate and getting awfully heavy. We have occasional bathes in the creek, which runs as hard as ever. I am glad you are thinking of giving us a look up. . . .

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Dec. 1881.

WILLY TO HIS GRANDMOTHER IN ENGLAND.

The Ranche,
March 7, 1881.

. . . The first Spring I was here was the drought, when nobody raised anything, which was discouraging. Last year we did fairly for our first year of farming and sheep ; but this year finds us *well* ahead of our business. Our sheep couldn't be doing better ; last year's experience in the lambing season taught us what it was necessary to have for the proper management of the lambs.

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These are dropping like hail now (eight to-day!), and they are at once drafted off into the pasture, where they remain for a few days till the ewes "take" properly to them. Each lamb is marked with a red spot or line on a part of its body, and the ewe marked in the same way, so that we know exactly which lamb belongs to which ewe; and a record is kept of the date the lamb is born, and of its mark, so as to know when it can with safety be allowed to run with the flock. When a few days old, and the ewe has taken properly to the lamb, they are turned into the field, where the oats are coming up splendidly; this brings a flush of milk on the ewe, and gives the lamb a good start. The last lamb born to-day made our fiftieth. . . . We have about four acres of oats as I told you, growing well; and two days ago I put in about an acre of corn, and to-day I hauled up the "camp tricks" to the tent at the Schultz field, as I am going to camp up there and plough up for corn. Our spring onions are coming up splendidly; and this morning I put in our seed sweet potatoes, from which grow the vines which are planted out later on—the vines "produce" the potatoes, so to speak. I have a seed-bed with beets, cabbages, lettuces, squashes,

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ground.

and cauliflowers in it, and some of them are beginning to come up; and I have a bed of very early corn in, and I expect we shall be the first round here to have roasting ears; and my ground for beans, melons, tomatoes, &c., is all ploughed, and ready to be planted, as soon as Spring has regularly set in, at least as soon as all chance of cold is gone, for Spring has set in some time; the grass is growing up green, and the wild flowers and bushes are all opening, and the nights are getting quite warm. We planted out sixteen fruit-trees, apples and peaches, and they are all doing well; and the comfreys have been green for weeks, and we are planting out a large patch of them this Spring. You have no idea how useful they are in case of a sick ewe. I forget whether I told you that the grass seeds did not come to anything, but that the clover is all coming up, and looking well; I think it is going to prove a very valuable addition to the herbage here. We planted it on about half-an-acre in the pasture, and have fenced off a little patch to keep off the sheep and calves, and let it run to seed. We are still getting plenty of milk from old Gentle, and within a few weeks we shall have more milk than we shall know what to do with, unless

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PART IV. we get a pig, as we have several good cows going Feb. to
Dec. 1881.
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ground. to calve.

The English ewes begin to lamb the day after to-morrow, and Flora, the collie that Mr. Hewitt sent me, pups to-morrow, and we have two hens hard at work setting, and the whole boiling of them are cackling and laying, so we are increasing to a great extent. And lastly, I forgot old Molly, the mare, she has gone off to her old range preparatory to foaling; and another mare of ours, who runs between here and B——, is also going to have a foal. Oh! and then the cat; she's going to have kittens. I think I've told you about everything now.

We have all had a fit of letter-writing to-night: at this time of year I'm afraid we neglect it a good deal. From daylight to late at night we are kept "a-going," I assure you: first it's cooking breakfast and milking, and separating newly-born lambs and their ewes from the flock, then turning out the flock and drafting the older lambs with their ewes into the field, and holding refractory ewes for the lambs to suck; then there's ploughing or planting all day; then the flock comes in, and more new lambs to "fix," and more suckling and feeding; then supper to cook and washing-up to

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do, and by the time one has finished supper, one feels as though one could fall to sleep at the table. It's glorious fun though; and we enjoy the life immensely. I have to shave now! It is my Sunday morning's job generally. The Doctor is just off (11 p.m.) to his tent by the sheep-pen, where he has his cot, and sleeps every night now. You've no idea how well he is looking; you would hardly know him.

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Dec. 1881.

The Ranche,

March 17, 1881.

... The collie has pupped; she only had two puppies, but they are doing well. All the country is green now, and the grass is everywhere splendid, and the creeks here and at the Schultz field running hard.

WILLY TO MADGE IN TENNESSEE.

The Ranche,

May 23, 1881.

I suppose you will get to Tennessee before this letter. I hope you and Granny will have had a jolly journey. Thanks for your long letter from O—. I think that as you say you shall come down here if Doctor and I don't go up

PART IV. there to see you, we shall just sit still and let Feb. to
Dec. 1881.
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ground. you come ; less trouble, you know.

THE DOCTOR TO MADGE IN TENNESSEE.

The Ranche,

Sunday, June 5, 1881.

I suppose that you have by this time got settled down a bit in your new house. I hope you appreciate the wood fires, and wooden fences and houses, which are far better than coals and bricks. . . . The flock is in the Schultz field to-day, and I am down at the house baking, as we find that we can bake better bread in a stove than in a skillet. I presume you have everything handsome in the "stove and cooking tricks" line, and have not had to bake in a skillet, nor fry your bacon on a toasting-fork, nor even been reduced to boiling your eggs in the coffee? . . . All our cows have calved now, including Gentle (the cow we were milking till March). Our cats are not so fat as they used to be, so we are obliged to feed them two or three times a week. You should just see them after being fed on beef! The flock is beginning to look fat again, and the lambs are so big that I have to count

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them all together now, or I should make mistakes. My red mare will be just the animal for you to ride when you come down to visit us, as she is "gentle as a dawg," and both fast and sure-footed. I rode eighty miles on her in two days last week, but she played out after seventy miles of it; and it must have been 11 p.m. before I reached camp. Next day I kept losing the sheep all the morning by dropping off to sleep unawares. . . .

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Dec. 1881.

The Ranche,

June 30, 1881.

. . . Are you going to set up by yourself when you have bought your piece of land, or are you only going to buy it as a speculation? I have the right to preempt 80 acres of State land for nothing; but I have not done so yet, as I cannot do it twice, and I may find a piece some day which cannot be got in any other way, except by buying it at a dollar an acre. I took a photo of the ranche last Sunday, and I am going to mettle up and get some papers prepared for taking positives next Sunday. If I succeed I'll send you one. All the stock are doing well, and so are your affectionate brothers; but we are dreadfully

PART IV. ·in want of rain. A watery new moon has just
 Gaining
 ground. come, so I expect there will be a big storm in
 Feb. to
 Dec. 1881.
 a day or two, and I keep one eye on the sky,
 and the other on my macintosh to be ready
 for it. . . .

NOTE.—About this time Willy sold his original ranche, and he and the Doctor went into camp within the rock-fenced 60-acre pasture, “the Schultz field” (which had been planted in part with cotton in 1880), in the centre of their new purchase. Here they pitched their two tents, and put up sheds, &c. for the sheep. Lenny Windale had left them, and his place had been taken by C—, a young Pennsylvanian, who went to them to learn the sheep business.

THE DOCTOR TO MADGE IN TENNESSEE.

Central Hotel, San Antonio,

July 12, 1881.

. . . So I must wait till 8.30 a.m. to-morrow. I rode down on Billy, and when I reached town I led him under the shed, and, forgetting how tall he was, I tried to lead him out the other side, which is rather low; the horn of the saddle caught in the beam supporting the rafters, old Billy got scared, and put his weight into it, and sent the beam flying out against my forehead. It was a 4 in. by 2 in. and 14 feet long, so the wonder is it didn't hurt me. As it was, it just

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broke the skin for about half an inch; but it scared a lot of "colored ladies" at the other end of the yard, and they came running down with a bucket and rags, and insisted on mopping up my face. The roof supports itself now, as I have broken away the only beam that held it up, and can't put it up again without help. I have purchased a lot more paper for positives, and a few requisite bottles, and shall go to work with renewed vigor next Sunday. Everything on the ranche is doing well, and I am here more for pleasure than business, though of course I shall get a lot of things now I *am* here. If there is any particular thing (bar live stock) that you would like a picture of, write to me, and I'll see if I can take it. . . .

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Dec. 1881.

FROM WILLY TO MADGE.

The Ranche,

July 14, 1881.

. . . Have you got your donkey or mule yet? Thunder! It would be as good as a circus to see you prancing about on a sprightly pie-balled mule; tail cut short, likewise mane; none of your lanky good-for-nothing mules, but a fat,

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ground.

chirpy chap, ready at a moment's notice to seize the bit in his teeth, and "git" from one end of the avenue to the other before the unsuspecting rider knew he had started; one that would take offence at a neighbouring fence, and kick the last paling of it into sawdust; then throw his ears back somewhere in the neighbourhood of the tip of his tail, and chaw down the nearest pine-tree. Admission free; children in arms half-price! The Gov. says that you say there are several things the Doctor asked about, packed away in the various packages, otherwise I would not summon up courage to ask if that small scrap-book of mine (blue, I believe) is still in the land of the living. . . .

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Dec. 1881.

THE DOCTOR TO HIS FATHER IN TENNESSEE.

The Ranche,

Sept. 4, 1881.

. . . I am shearing some of the lambs just to see how they get on; for it is a very general theory that shearing twice a year is better for sheep. I suppose they never take a "full clip" so far north as Tennessee, as the winter must set in before they could grow enough wool? . . . We shall have to work like blazes for the next week

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ground.

or two, as we have to finish the fence down the middle of the pasture, and several other jobs, before the middle of this month, and the one who happens to be herding cannot do much with his spare time, as he has to keep in sight the flock even while they are lying down. I take out a piece of canvas with me, and shear a lamb or two while they lie down, but that is all. A lamb looks awfully queer and angular after shearing, but he feels better. . .

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THE DOCTOR TO MADGE.

The Ranche,

Sept. 9, 1881.

. . . So I hope that by the time this letter reaches you, you will be able to read to yourself. . . . While I was herding to-day, a big shower came down, and I took shelter in a hollow tree; but unfortunately for me, it had a small opening on the rainy side, and a small lake began to creep gradually in along the floor of my house. For about ten minutes I kept it out by making a dam of the loose earth that lay inside the tree, but at last my materials gave out, and the dam broke, so I had to stand in two inches of water till the rain stopped.

PART IV. . . . Our division fence is stretching gradually down the pasture, but as yet we have not put any boards on. Willy and I made the water-gate two days ago, and as there was a tree on only one side of the creek, I had to cut a forked post for the other. The tree I cut down to make the post of was unfortunately so bound up with another one, that, although I cut it clear through, it refused to fall, and I had to cut down the other as well; and as the other was a dead pecan, very thick and as hard as rocks, I had a very tough job. When I got my post cut loose, we found it too heavy to haul, so I caught my mare, put the rope round the horn of the saddle, and made her pull it for me, while I kept the rope from cutting her back. . . . When you come down here you will have to take up the photography business, as I really believe I never shall have time to go in for it much. You can have "the whole bag of tricks," if you find you can manage to work them, though I am afraid I shall be a very poor master.

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Dec. 1881.

The Rancho,

Sept. 22, 1881.

. . . Our fence is more than half done now, although there are no boards up, for the post-setting is far the worst job. On Tuesday we went

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ground.

out surveying our new land, and had a good lot of walking to do, and not a little of it was pretty tough, as one has to go straight through everything that comes in one's way. Once we came to a bluff and had to go round, and just guess at the distance, for, as we were only surveying an old tract, it didn't matter if we were 30 or 40 feet out, so long as we found the corners and went straight. We had an awful lot of trouble finding the corners, as many of them were in the brush, and several of them had been destroyed; however, we found the trees (they always "blaze" the nearest tree to a corner), so we made new ones. Father has written to say that he still intends to come down "some time" this Fall. I don't believe he will come at all if he doesn't make up his mind to come soon, for winter is not far off now. . . . We are labelling some of our ewes now, and they (the labels) look quite neat, and don't appear to rust at all. Our shorn lambs are growing wool very fast, and eat so much, that they are broader than they are deep; in fact I am afraid lest some member of the "Bergh" society will have us up for "overloading" them! . . .

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WILLY TO MADGE.

The Rancho,

Sept. 22, 1881.

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ground.

. . . . I have just been, for some days past, blistering up my hands like anything, digging post holes for our new fence; but we have nearly finished it now. I hope the Governor will bring you down here this Fall, as he says he may be able to, and that you will be strong enough to get lots of riding here.

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Dec. 1881.

THE DOCTOR TO MADGE.

The Rancho,

Oct. 2, 1881.

. . . . We are making preparations for winter by buying feed now, and I believe we shall soon erect a sheep-shed. We have already got all the fodder and hay we shall need, but have not got any cotton-seed yet. . . . The acorns are falling thick and fast now, and the sheep are very troublesome when they get among them, as they are so eager about picking them up that they don't look where they are going, and get scattered. I opened an acorn to-day which had

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eight separate kernels! I never found one with more than three before, so I expect it is not common, and I almost wish I hadn't pitched it away.

Feb. to
Dec. 1881.

WILLY TO MADGE.

San Antonio,

Oct. 11, 1881.

. . . . I hope you have quite recovered now, and are getting lots of riding and other exercise. . . . I am now down in San Antonio, buying such little winter clothing and sheep-sled material as we shall need for winter, as we may get some cold weather this month, although it doesn't generally come till November.

THE DOCTOR TO HIS FATHER IN TENNESSEE.

The Ranche,

Oct. 14, 1881.

. . . . I am glad to hear that Madge is getting so strong and heavy, though 93 lbs. seems awfully light. I am beginning to put on my winter coat of flesh, though I haven't weighed myself lately. I measured myself the other day and found that I was 5 ft. 9 ins., which is about what I expected. We are all thriving, and so are the stock. Rain

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has been so plentiful that the screw-worms have got into one or two head of stock, but nothing much, and they are soon going to disappear for the winter. . . . C — seems to like the country pretty well now, but he freely confesses that if we had been stoveless and big-tentless (as we were not long before he came), he might have gone back to Pennsylvania without giving the place a fair trial. . . . We have had to make a new sheep-pen on the side of the hill since the rain commenced, as the old one was too sloshy, and might have given them foot rot. The new one must be nearly half an acre, and holds them very nicely, giving them plenty of room to scatter. At a pinch it would accommodate over 2000, but we don't like to crowd them. . . . We are going to make a house soon, I believe, but as for *out*-houses, such an idea has never entered our heads! It takes one of us all day to herd, another to cook and do odd jobs, and Willy is always busy up to his eyes, without any extra work of that kind. Even the division fence (which we found we could do without for the present) remains half finished, and we nearly run out of fire-wood occasionally. Why don't some of you come down and help us do work that pays?

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THE DOCTOR TO MADGE.

The Ranche,

Oct. 26, 1881.

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. . . . Willy has bought our winter clothing, and I am supplied with a huge overcoat with a cape, which completely swallows me up, and the collar of which touches the rim of my hat when I put it up. It will be A 1 for herding in, during a Norther. Willy has one too, but it doesn't possess a cape. We have had one or two touches of north wind lately, but no *Northers*, so I hope we shall not have a very severe winter, as some of the prophets say. If we *do* though, you had better all of you come down here, for it will be far worse in Tennessee! . . .

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Dec. 1881.

The Ranche,

Nov. 6, 1881.

As one of the "events" of our not-too-over-exciting life has just occurred, I think you would like to hear all about it. I refer to the San Antonio fair. I will begin at the beginning by saying that on Monday last Willy went down with a buck and ewe of the Oxford Downs, and five half-breed yearlings. On Wednesday morning I saddled the mare and rode down myself. I got

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down by 2:30 p.m., and found Willy and the sheep all right. There were very few sheep on view except our own, but they *were* beauties. All of them belonged to one man, one pen of Merino bucks, and one of ewes. They were all wool, from their noses to their hoofs. Alas! one cannot say "to the tips of their tails." There were only five or six goats, but they were likewise beauties. The show of pigs was even worse—only four! I can't say whether they were good or bad, as I don't know anything about pigs. Chickens were more numerous, but I am no judge of them either. There were very few bulls, but a quantity of cows—from the San Antonio dairies I believe, so they looked rather poor. The best show was of horses, but there again I am no judge. . . . There were a great many wagons, farm implements, and produce, on view, but they didn't interest me much. Next day I came back, so that is all the adventure.

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Dec. 1881.

Nov. 10, 1881.

Having put this away and forgotten to post it, I will just add that Willy and the sheep have arrived safe, and everything is going on as usual. Our next job will be the erection of a

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kitchen to put the stove in, as it has occasionally been impossible to light fires out of doors at all. Willy and C — are at present employed making a cotton quilt. I expect the cold won't have a chance against us this Fall, as we have been buying all sorts of overcoats, underclothes, and bedclothes, and cutting up a lot of wood. In any case, I hope to survive till you come! . . .

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Dec. 1881.

FROM THE DOCTOR TO HIS FATHER.

The Ranche,

Nov. 10, 1881.

. . . . Willy seems to think that Madge had better lodge at the S——'s, and I am not sure that (supposing it can be arranged) he isn't right. In the first place, even if we could put her up in a room near the tents, it would be pretty difficult to make things as comfortable for her as they ought to be; and after all it would be easy enough for her to come up every day on horse-back, or for us to go down in the evenings; and if, when you come down, you should wish to arrange it differently, I reckon Madge could monopolise the kitchen till we got a new room added on. We are soon going to build a kitchen, and turn the big tent

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ground.

round so that they will join. . . . I do hope you will really be able to come down this time, as it is over two years since you left, and it is high time that we had a spice of civilization in this camp. Just think of "baching" for two years without intermission! The wonder is that we haven't married!!! . . . When you come down, you should bring all the too-awfully disreputable clothing you can raise, and leave them for the use of the camp; but I suppose that you yourself go in rather strong for that kind of thing, now that you live in the "backwoods"? . . .

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Dec. 1881.

WILLY TO HIS GRANDMOTHER IN TENNESSEE.

The Rancho,

Nov. 12, 1881.

. . . We are having glorious weather, and have not had a frost yet, so the grass and foliage are still green, and stock and sheep get lots to eat; in fact, the grass is running to seed in many places through not being eaten down enough. We have had good rains lately, and I think there is every promise of lots of grazing during winter. Very few sheepmen feed an ounce to their sheep during winter, but as we only have a few (comparatively)

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ground.

we are able to feed them a little. I gave them some cotton-seed this morning, for the first time this winter, and I expect to feed them some about every three days; this will keep them fat. There was a fair in San Antonio all last week, and I was down there all the week. There were classes for Down buck, Down ewe, and pen of five young ewes, results of cross between long and fine wools, all of which classes I entered for, and took down seven sheep in the wagon accordingly. There was no competition in either of the classes, so of course I took all three premiums. There were some very fine Merino sheep on exhibition, and also some very fair cattle and horses. . . . We have just been manufacturing a quilt, and it is the most gorgeous thing you ever saw. We have two more to make, and then we shall each have one, and can defy any cold we may have this winter. I bought, for the one made, fourteen yards of a very pretty dark-coloured cotton print, and sewed three widths together for each side. It's seven feet long and six wide. We made a frame, and stretched one side to it; then laid on seven pounds of cotton, and then put the lid, or whatever you call it, on, and then sewed through a piece of knitting cotton all over it, every four inches, each

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ground.

way, and then hemmed the edges; and it looks just as if it had come out of a shop in Bond Street, only rather better if anything! We have begun to feed our two milch cows. We feed them each half a bucket-full of cotton-seed, night and morning, so we have enough milk to supply a regiment, or should have if we took all the milk; but as we don't need it, we let the calves have most of it. Our cows that have heifer calves we let run out, so that the calves have all the milk; we sometimes don't see them for a week or ten days, as they go some distance off this time of year, and only come up occasionally for salt. . . .

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WILLY TO MADGE.

The Rancho,

Dec. 8, 1881.

I suppose you have got your chicken-house, &c., pretty well finished now. Chickens in this part of the world are not so luxurious as up there, but then we don't get such cold weather here, nor is it continuous. To-day it was 80° in the shade. Fine Christmas weather isn't it? The sheep are just doing splendidly. They are herded all day, and brought within sight of the pen about sundown,

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ground.

and then left, and they gradually graze towards the pen, and go in by themselves when it is dark. We have been so busy lately that we have only just begun our sheep-shed ; but I hope we shall have it up in lots of time before lambing in February. By the way, mind you don't let the Guvnor let that trip business fall through. I want you to see all our stock, &c., and have lots of riding down here ; so bring your riding dress, or, if you haven't got one, I'll get you one down here when you come, as I expect lots of riding will do you good. We've got six horses, so we'll be able to make a big turn-out all together. I think it will be better for you to sleep up at the S——'s, if we can arrange it so, as when we do get a few days cold weather our camp arrangements are draughty, and not altogether the place I should like you to be in. The S——'s are within a mile of here, and one of us can come over every morning and bring you down here. You're a brave little girl to want to come and rough it with us, but you don't know your brothers if you think they're going to let you. Try and get the Guvnor to come down as early in January as possible, as we shall have lots of time to give up to recreation (comparatively) in January ; but about the 10th

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of February we begin lambing, and from the 15th on we shall be at it in earnest, and shall be kept busy. We have bachelor feasts around here now and then. Sometimes the chap that bought my other ranche gives them, and sometimes we give them. The last was given by him, when we had a wild turkey that he had shot. He is a very good cook, and he cooked and stuffed that turkey in a way that would shame a Soyer. He shot another last night, and so to-morrow night we go over there again, and if you want to see a turkey "fly," you'd better be there. I hope you will have a jolly Christmas up there. I suppose people are beginning to think about preparations now. Our next bachelor lay-out (after to-morrow) is going to be spread by this ranche, on Christmas day—plum puddings, &c. . . .

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Dec. 1881.

PART V.

MADGE'S TRIP TO THE RANCHE.

INTRODUCTORY.

PART V. IN May, 1881, as may have been gathered from some of the preceding letters, my mother came to the United States, bringing Madge with her, and settled in East Tennessee. Chico remained at his art work in London. In January, 1882, business called me to the South, and I took Madge with me, leaving her with her brothers while I went to New Orleans and other places. By this time Lenny Windale had left the ranche for another part of the country, and Willy and the Dr. had C — , a young Pennsylvanian, with them, learning the sheep business. The boys had engaged lodgings for Madge at a neighbouring farm-house; but she insisted on roughing it with them at their camp.—W. H.

MY VISIT TO "THE BOYS" IN TEXAS.

East Tennessee,

March, 1882.

We were really starting at last, to pay that long-promised visit to the boys; and very glad I was at the prospect of seeing my two brothers again. Willy I had not seen for over three years, and the Doctor for two years and a-half. I came out

PART V. with my grandmother last year to live in Tennessee, and as soon as I had recovered my strength, after a serious illness, which I had soon after our arrival, my father and I had settled when we should take our journey to see "our boys." We started on the 5th of January last, and, after staying a few days at different places on the route, we arrived at San Antonio at 8 p.m. on the 11th. On the 13th we took places in a lumbering old coach, with room for six passengers, which was to take us to B —, the little town three and a half miles from my brother's ranche. The distance was thirty miles, and we took seven hours and a-half to do it, for there had been a good deal of rain, which had made the roads very heavy. The next day Willy (my eldest brother) came over to town in his wagon to take us and our luggage to the ranche. It was drizzling nearly all the way, and we were rather damp when we alighted just outside a rock fence with a small gate in it, and found ourselves at the long-wished-for goal. The "house" consisted of a good-sized tent, and a little board kitchen, which was to be my bedroom during my stay. This kitchen was just large enough to hold a small cot bedstead, the stove, a chair, some shelves, and two rough boards that

PART V. answered as a kitchen table, and also as dressing table for me. It was very roughly built of boards, which had shrunk from exposure to the weather, leaving about half an inch of space between each board. The roof was by no means weather-tight, of which I was uncomfortably reminded sometimes, by waking up to find a steady cold drip coming into my ear or down my neck. During the day the cot had to be folded up and carried into the tent, to make room for the cooking arrangements. My wardrobe was a small rough wooden box without a lid, and, as it stood just underneath the kitchen "table," it used often to be the receptacle of the greasy drops which found their way, from time to time, between the two boards which composed that article of furniture. The "family" consisted of five members; my father, my two brothers, and myself, and Mr. C——, a young man who had been staying there about six months, working for his board. The first sound I heard every morning was a shout from the tent of "Oh Madge!" which, if I did not immediately answer, was repeated until I was wide awake enough to reply. I then lit a lamp (for it was generally before sunrise, or "sun-up" as it is called there), and hustled on my clothes, and called out that I

PART V. was ready. Then the business of the day would begin. The cot was stowed away in the tent, and the fire lit, and then breakfast had to be got ready. On my first morning Willy initiated me into the mysteries of making "slapjacks." These flabby, indigestible things are made of flour and water made into a batter, and fried on skillets in bacon grease. They are pretty good when hot, but after they get cold it requires a good deal of courage to bury one's teeth in them. We had our meals on a small table in the tent, and as there was no table-cloth, we used to bring the pots and pans straight from the fire, and stand them on the table wherever a corner could be found. I forgot to say that there was no floor to either kitchen or tent, but only the bare ground, and one morning, after a particularly heavy rain, I stepped into half-an-inch of mud on getting out of bed. Directly after breakfast, my younger brother, the Doctor, or Mr. C——, whosever turn it was, started off with the sheep, and was not seen again till tea-time, at sundown. They never took any dinner with them, as they said it was more trouble to carry it than it was worth, as they have to walk all day during the winter. In summer the sheep lie down during the heat of the day, and the

PART V. shepherd has time to go home and get his dinner. The country in that part of Texas is hilly, and the grass is green all winter. The principal trees being live oaks, which are evergreen, takes away the desolate look in winter, and makes it almost appear like summer. Three days after our arrival at the ranche, we had our first experience of a Texas "Norther." It had been comfortably warm all day, but looked threatening. We were hard at work making a quilt, of which there were already three, when suddenly Willy appeared at the door, and exclaiming "Here it comes!" slammed the door to after him. The next minute a gale of wind began, which seemed to shrivel us up, and make us tuck our feet under us, as we hurried on with the quilt. It rained at the same time, and during the night the rain froze as it fell on the tent, and made it as hard as a board before morning. We went to bed early, after trying in vain to get warm over the tiny cooking-stove, and after pinching my feet for some minutes, and putting every available article of clothing on my bed, I fell asleep. There were only three cots in the tent, and, as there were four people to sleep in them, my two brothers slept together in one, and I think they had the best of it that night. The

PART V. next morning there was not much washing done, I am afraid, for the wind and rain still continued, and all we could do was to try to keep warm. The poor shepherd had to trudge out as usual, after being laden with all the great coats he could carry.

I used sometimes to ride with one or other of my brothers when they went to hunt up the horses or cattle on the hills. The day after we arrived Willy and I rode out on two of the work horses, to see if we could find a little sorrel mare belonging to the Doctor, who with her colt had been running out on the hills for some months. We soon found her, and I dismounted whilst Willy took off my saddle and put it on Polly, the mare. I then mounted again, and we continued our ride, the colt following. As soon as I wanted to go a little faster than a walk, Polly set off at a tearing gallop and kept on just as long as she chose, for I had not the slightest control over her. Willy enjoyed the way we were racing across country, and shouted every now and then at Polly to make her go faster. I was not much of a rider, having had very little practice, but by a miracle I kept on, though I had several narrow escapes as Polly swerved round

PART V. corners at a gallop. When I next rode her, I made Willy put on a strong curb, and with that I could just manage to stop her when I wished.

Towards the end of our stay at the ranche, Willy went away for a few days to buy some more sheep, and came back with a nice flock of 207 very fine Merino ewes and bucks which he had bought about 30 miles off. The next day he, and father, and I, were hard at work cataloguing, ear-labelling, and branding them. The ear-labels are small slips of metal, one of which is slipped through a hole made in the ear of each sheep, and then the ends pinched together to prevent them coming out. Each label had my brother's name and a number on it; and as he labelled each sheep, I wrote down on a piece of paper the number, age, and quality of wool of the sheep, and any other particular characteristic, as he told me them. As each sheep was being labelled my father branded them with an iron made on purpose, and dipped in tar. Before beginning to label the sheep, we had driven them into a good-sized pen, and sprinkled sulphur on them; and then we drove them into a very small pen, where there was just room for them to stand,

PART V. so that they could be easily taken hold of. We finished them at about 3 p.m., after working since breakfast; and then the Doctor came home with the other sheep and had his dinner, as he was to take the new sheep out in the afternoon. When Willy and father and I went in to our dinner, we found that all the food in the house consisted of a scrap of bacon, a small piece of bread, and some cold slapjacks and porridge. There was no fire, so we ate what there was, and washed it down with cold coffee; and I don't think I ever enjoyed a meal more. We never allowed ourselves more than one plate each at a meal, to save washing up, so I always considered carefully, before beginning to eat, which thing to eat first, so as not to spoil the taste of those which came after. My brothers had been so long used to this sort of thing, that they generally put everything in together, and made what I considered the most disgusting mixtures, such as—porridge, milk, slapjacks, molasses, and bacon, all at once.

They had to fetch all their water, except rain-water, from a creek some distance off; and they generally took a large barrel in the wagon, and filled it at the stream, and then brought it to the

PART V. camp and set it on a stand, and we drew out the water as it was wanted. The barrel-full lasted us about a week; and once, when we were all very busy, the water gave out, and we had to use nothing but rain-water for everything, cooking included, for several days.

Whenever the weather was warm enough, my brothers bathed in one of the streams; in summer they wash their clothes at the same time; they have nothing but shirts and socks to wash, as sheets, pillow-cases, table-cloths, and such-like luxuries, they do not indulge in. Their beds consist of sheep-skins, blankets, and home-made quilts. They had made me a mattress, and stuffed it with hay from the stack in the yard, and they had also made me a pillow filled with wool; and Willy had purchased a curtain, piece of carpet, and two cane chairs, besides the necessary bed-clothes. There were no chairs before we came, and the boys sat on boxes set up on end, which were always tipping over with them, or coming to pieces. Willy had intended to build me a small room before our arrival, as I had insisted on living in camp, but, the roads being so bad, he could not get anyone to haul the lumber from San Antonio. It did arrive, however, about two

PART V. days before we left. Willy had begun the room with a few boards which were already there, and had finished one end of it, and put a window in it before we left, but unfortunately he had no time for more.

The room was finished after we had left, and is now known as "Madge's room." Our whole visit only lasted about five weeks, but it showed me what "roughing it" means; and I was very sorry indeed to have to leave the ranche.

MADGE.

PART VI.

WILLY'S, THE DOCTOR'S, AND
CHICO'S LETTERS.

INTRODUCTORY.

PART VI. A FEW days after Madge and I had returned to Ten- April, 1882,
nessee from the South, and before I left for New York, July, ^{to} 1883.
Chico turned up at my mother's house, having come
straight through from London. While he was out in 1879
he had made up his mind that ranche work with Willy
would suit him better than art work in London, but had
returned to the latter, to give it a fair trial. When, how-
ever, he had found, in June, 1880, that the Doctor had
decided on sticking to the ranche, his wish to be there
also was strengthened, and confirmed by his experience
in London lodgings, after his grandmother and Madge left
for America, in May, 1881. He declined therefore to give
art a trial in New York, stayed a week or so with us in
Tennessee, and then went on to the ranche. He went
viâ Memphis. The Mississippi was in full flood at the
time, and, in going down it and up the St. Francis to a
point at which to strike the railway, he was out of sight
of land for three days! On his arrival, it was agreed that
he should give the ranche, and the ranche should give
him, a year's trial, before he should conclude to give up
art as his profession. At the end of his year he had no
wish to return to art, and, the Doctor having come of age
in March 1883, they were both taken into partnership by
Willy.—W. H.

FROM CHICO TO MADGE.

The Ranche,

April, 1882.

PART VI. . . . We began shearing the beginning of last April, 1882, week, and it lasted three and a half days. There ^{to} July, 1883. were seven men at it. I was cooking for the crowd, which proved rather warm work, especially as we ran out of water the second day, and I had to haul it up from the creek in buckets. We killed a sheep and fed on the fat of the land. I found it rather difficult to keep ten men in bread, and was baking all one day from sunrise till a quarter past twelve at night. We were generally up till about half past eleven, so you see we had a cheerful time. We began the day by driving up a lot of sheep from the pasture, where the whole flock was, and penning them under the shed, in front of which was the shearing table, about two feet high, for the shearers to rest the sheep on. By the time this was done I had breakfast ready, after which the shearing began. Willy tied up the fleeces as they were cut, and Doctor stamped them into the sacks, which were hung up to the rafters of the shed. Each man was given a card-board check after he had finished a sheep, and these

PART VI. were counted at the end of the day, as the men April, 1882,
are paid by the number of sheep they shear, and to July, 1883.
not by the day. About mid-day we had dinner, after which Willy, the Doctor, and I, had another round up in the pasture, while the men rested a bit, and then shearing again till dusk. Then supper was ready, and after that we sat and confabbed a bit, and at about half past nine or so we took the tables out of "your room," for the men to turn in on the floor. The room is finished all but the end next the kitchen, which is not boarded up yet. We had meals in it, and the men slept in it, which was a pretty tight fit I can tell you. Seven rather large men, one of them pretty fat, had to lie in a row on the floor. The end man overhung the edge of the flooring, and rocked himself to sleep! However, the room was quite large enough for feeding purposes, with the two tables. One of the shearers was very talkative, and rather monopolised the conversation. He talked and smoked all day while he was shearing, and all the meal-times, and as I heard some one perpetually talking, and groaning, and snorting in his sleep, I put that down to him too. All the men left before dinner last Thursday, and probably went straight off to another ranche

PART VI. where shearing was going to begin. . . . The April, 1882, fleas are an awful plague here; at least they ^{to} July, 1883. devour *me*, though they hardly touch the other two. They run up from the floor up my legs by scores, whenever I'm in the tent. I remember one night they wouldn't let me go to bed. I had taken off all my clothes and was going to the head of my bed to get my night shirt, when I felt two of them bounding up my legs; so I had to go back to the lamp on the table to crack them: then went for the night-shirt again with the same result. This joke was repeated five times that night, but I oddsed it at last by climbing up on to the table to kill the fleas, and then getting to bed over the chairs and barrels without touching the floor. I don't think they are quite so plentiful, now that we've tied Dip up in the corner of the sheep-shed. . . . The kitten is much tamer than he used to be, and will take food out of your hand. It's wonderful what a lot of bullying that cat will take from Dip. She could easily keep out of his way if she liked, now Dip is tied up; but she comes up smiling, to be hauled about by the scruff of the neck. I don't suppose it hurts though. . . . There will only be one or two more lambs this year, I fancy. Some of those

PART VI. which were born first are so big now, that they April, 1882,
look nearly as big as their mothers, since shearing. to July, 1883.

You ought to see them in the evening, when it's beginning to get cool. They get frisky, and go tearing about in bunches of about fifty, down the road as hard as they can pelt, every now and then giving tremendous sidelong jumps, sending their hind legs into the air. Sometimes two lots will charge into each other at full speed, and pile up on to one another in the middle, quite like a foot-ball scrimmage. It's a wonder they don't break any bones. Why, the other day, Doctor found a lamb down that big hole among the bushes in front of the tent, which I suppose you have seen. It must be 18 ft. deep in the shallowest place. Yet this lamb had jumped down, and hadn't hurt himself a bit. A new-born lamb is a most clumsy animal, very nearly all leg, and the essence of stupidity. It was only yesterday I saw one trying to suck a wheel-barrow; and they will occasionally follow a hen about in preference to their mother. . . .

FROM THE DOCTOR TO MADGE.

April 28, 1882.

PART VI. . . . The other night, we had an exceedingly fine Aurora borealis, which at first looked like the reflection of a gigantic prairie fire, but soon shot out in long bright rays, which stretched nearly half across the sky. . . . The wool is by this time safe in San Antonio. . . . By the way, wouldn't a letter look odd if one put headings to each paragraph, like a newspaper, such as,

News of the Neighbourhood :

Tea-table topics :

Work of the week :

Perils of pastoral life :

Post-prandial peripatetics :

Recent ranche records :

Crude camp calendar :

and Egotistical experiences.

FROM WILLY TO HIS GRANDMOTHER.

The Ranche,

May 21, 1882.

. . . We sheared a little over 3,100 lbs. of wool, and it sold for 26½ cents per lb. in San Antonio.

PART VI. . . . Isn't there a saying, that one "is never so ^{to} April, 1882, happy as when working hard"? It's a very true July, 1883. one I think, for we enjoy ourselves immensely, although we put in just about as much work between daylight and dark, as we can well squeeze in, and by the time we've eaten supper, we feel that we've just done as much as it's possible to do. I'm afraid that suggestion of yours about some one to cook for us, wouldn't work. We are more independent you see, as we are, and one of us can always be spared to do the cooking, which is not a very scientific affair, in a sheep camp. Bread is the hardest job; but Chico has hit that off splendidly, and turns out "a first class article!" Dewberries are about over; but San Antonio is full of the lower country wild plums, a most delicious little fruit, and very soon our hill plums will be ripe, as also the grapes. The cherry crop will be short this year I think, but I expect we shall get lots of fruit without them. . . . I gave Dip away as he was such a nuisance to have to look after, and was too fond of making playthings of lambs' ears.

FROM WILLY.

B—,

June 8, 1882.

PART VI. . . . We have not reached our new (rented) range April, 1882yet. The Doctor and young H— are with the to July, 1883.

sheep, about seven miles off, and I have just run back to the ranche to see that the calves &c. are all right. We are having some downright camping out, going up; a wagon and an 8 feet by 8 feet tent, are our houses, and we do not pen the sheep at night, but let them lie down about 100 yards from the wagon. Sometimes they start off in the night, and then we have to go out and round them back. They bleat when they start off, which wakes us up. . . .

The Ranche,

July 18, 1882.

The Doctor and I are just back from our ¹Guadaloupe exile, and very glad to get back. The sheep are looking first-rate, the change having done them a great deal of good; and our own range is looking splendid. We have now lots of range, and so can make all our arrangements complete, for taking every care of a large flock. . . . We had a big rain-storm the last night that we

¹ The hired ranche was on the Guadaloupe.

PART VI. had to camp out. We got a thorough soaking all April, 1882, night, but are none the worse for it. It began to rain hard just as we were turning in, and it poured through our blankets, and a stream ran underneath us. Next morning, the firewood was so wet it was no use waiting for a fire, so we had bread and water in a hurry, as the restless sheep wouldn't stay. . . . We have one cow, with her first calf, that is very fond of chewing up blankets and things. She came into the pen to-day, and chawed up an old shirt that was on the fence. She evidently enjoyed it, as she stayed around outside all the afternoon, after being driven away, trying to get in—to devour more shirts I suppose!

FROM THE DOCTOR TO MADGE.

Aug. 5, 1882.

. . . What put it into your head that we live on bacon and slapjacks all the year round? Slapjacks and molasses are all very well in winter, but we never touch them in summer. Our *menu* consists chiefly of beans, porridge, meat, bread and butter, eggs, bacon, tomatoes, and milk. We have lately varied it with fish, as Sam, the darkie herder, has discovered some small perch and cat-fish in our

PART VI. biggest water-hole. . . . We have become possessors April, 1882
of four of the finest bucks within fifty miles. They July, 1883,^{to}
are real beauties, as you may imagine, and if one
touches their skin, one's finger disappears up to the
second joint.

FROM WILLY.

The Ranche,

Aug. 20, 1882.

. . . We can now sympathise with you on the
goat question. We have five of them, regular
brutes. They are always up on the rock fence,
knocking it down. We bought them to eat out
the underbush in the pasture. To-day I caught
and "side-lined" them, i. e. tied the two side legs
of each one together; and I think this will keep
them from being able to jump the fence and get
out, as they have been doing. We still have to
keep ten or fifteen head of cattle in the pasture,
to keep the grass from getting too rank for the
sheep. We have a tremendous amount of work
to get through between now and November, but
one feels able to do lots of work when things go
on prosperously.

FROM THE DOCTOR TO MADGE.

Aug. 27, 1882.

PART VI. . . . We have got a large oat-bin under the shed April, 1882, next the rock fence, and have 130 bushels or so ^{to} July, 1883. in it, besides a hut full of oats in straw; and we shall probably put up a great deal of cotton-seed as soon as the fresh crop comes in, so there will be no lack of feed this winter, and I expect we shall not have a pasture full of scarecrows, like those you saw when you were down here last Spring. . . . We have got two patches of Bermuda grass started, and one of them is about the size of a table already.

FROM CHICO TO MADGE.

Sept. 10, 1882.

. . . A load of lumber arrived here this morning, and we shall be moving over the frame house from the lately-bought land in a few days; so you can come and see us as soon as you like. We have made a new pen, too, for the hay-ricks, and the place is getting quite a farmy look about it. I suppose you have heard of Willy's upset in B—— the other night. He drove over a cow

PART VI. in the dark, and it got up with the buck-board on its back, and tilted it right over. The buckboard is as light as a feather, and is very useful to get about in. It just holds two people comfortably, and has plenty of spring in it, as the fore and hind wheels are only connected by the flooring of boards, without any iron bar to stop the springiness.

FROM THE DOCTOR.

Sept. 13, 1882.

... The Jones' house is "bein tore downd," and a large portion of the more fragile parts have already arrived. The new cow-pen is finished, all but one string, and we shall have rails enough cut for *it* before long. It ranges from 5 ft. 4 in. to 6 ft. high all round; and we shall be able to rope wild stock in it, and brand. If one begins to rope in the present cow-pen, they break out.

FROM WILLY.

Sept. 23, 1882.

... The house we've just moved from the new range is going up rapidly, and we hope to get

PART VI. it finished before the 1st of October; and then April, 1882,
 we shall be able to get our clothes into a decent ^{to} July, 1883.
 place before winter. Up till now everything has
 kicked about on the ground in the tent; and it
 will be a tremendous relief to get into a decent
 habitation. Miss —— plays the piano, and sings.
 She has just got a new instrument, and plays
 my accompaniments very well, so I have a little
 music again occasionally.

FROM THE DOCTOR TO MADGE.

Sept. 30, 1882.

. . . I don't know how you got into the habit
 of it, but you call everything a “shanty” now.
 A tent is a tent, and a shanty is a shanty; but
 an 'ouse is an 'ouse, and should be called so.
 You have inflicted a deep and ragged wound in
 our pride by asking whether we live in the new
 shanty yet. . . .

FROM CHICO TO MADGE.

Oct. 1, 1882.

. . . The Doctor and I have just come up from
 our Sunday bathe. We can't get much of a swim

PART VI. without barking our knees, but the water flows April, 1882,
quickly, and it's very pleasant to lie and bask July, 1883,
in the shallow water; only take care the sun
doesn't skin you alive! The chief drawback is
the minnows, which come swarming round one,
and nibbling wherever they can find a sore,
which is excessively ill-natured of them to my mind.
Then there are some leeches, which stick on to
one in the most tenacious way; they will pull
out to about a yard in length, and stick on at
both ends. In fact, all the inhabitants of the
water (cray-fish included) seem determined one
shan't bathe in peace; so we lie on the rock
bed, where the water flows quickest, and flummux
them that way.

I've been going about barefoot for the last
three weeks or so, and I've serious thoughts of
giving up boots altogether as remnants of bar-
barism. You've no notion how comfortable it is,
when there are no thorns about; but my feet
are getting so hard now that even they don't
hurt much. . . .

We had Dick down here, for one night only.
He had come from New York for a car-load
of ponies, which he bought in San Antonio, I
think, and then paid us a flying visit before going

PART VI. back. He bought a wonderful chair in San Antonio; it is made entirely of cows' horns, excepting the seat I hope. They are very cleverly fitted together, and seem to sell here as fast as they can be made. You'd scarcely think they would be comfortable, but I believe they are. . . .

We have had a wonderful lot of people here lately. I shouldn't notice it so much if I wasn't cook; one seems to be in a perpetual state of killing the fatted calf. There have been the two carpenters and the herder of course, regularly, and also the men who hauled the house over; and two or three extra are sure to turn up when you're pretty nearly full already. However it's rather pleasant to have a crowd now and then. I spend all my spare time now looking out of the windows in the new house. It gives the country quite a new aspect somehow, looking at it through a window; and makes one feel respectable, not to say grand. I must really invest in a top hat now, to be in keeping with the ranche. . . .

FROM WILLY.

The Ranche

Oct. 8, 1882.

PART VI. . . . We got our cots into our new room last April, 1882, night for the first time; and it seemed quite July, 1883,^{to} strange, after having slept in a tent with no floor for so long. The house didn't seem to suffer at all from being moved, very little of the wood having to be replaced by new stuff. There was a kitchen behind the house where it stood before, a sort of small detached room: this we are going to move down to the creek about half-a-mile from here, to serve as a shepherd's hut and room to put cotton-seed in for the sheep.

FROM WILLY TO MADGE.

. . . I am sorry you have been having bad luck with your chickens this summer. I wish you were all down here, so that you could run our chicken ranche. Ours are all doing splendidly. It's no good perpetually selling off and buying more, with a view to getting strong healthy stock. The way to have it is this: make up your mind as to what breed you intend to have; then buy roosters

PART VI. of that breed, and kill or sell all your present ones. April, 1882,
 Then, when your young chickens grow up and ^{to} July, 1883.
 are old enough to lay, kill or sell your roosters
 and buy others of the same breed, but if possible,
 from a different poultry-yard than that from which
 the last came, and continue this rooster renewing
 part of the business every time the chickens are
 old enough to lay, which of course won't neces-
 sitate a selling off of the roosters more than once
 a year. You ought to have a few packages of
 "Condition powders" for stock and chickens (cost
 25 cents each down here), and, once a week regu-
 larly, mix a *tea-spoonful of the powder to a pint*
of corn-meal for every ten chickens, and then put
 in water enough to make it as thick as pretty
 thick porridge, and feed to the chickens. Follow
 all the above instructions, which are not difficult,
 and you may blame me if you don't have fine
 healthy chickens all the time. Of course, I pre-
 sume you feed your chickens regularly every
 day. . . .

FROM THE DOCTOR TO MADGE.

Oct. 15, 1882.

. . . . We have finished changing our little
 house from the old place to the creek. It used

PART VI. to be the kitchen, but now contains a ton and April, 1882,
 a half of cotton-seed. The sheep are camped July, 1883.
 there to-night, and I am going down there
 presently, to sleep on the cotton-seed.

FROM WILLY.

The Ranche,
 Nov. 6, 1882.

. . . We are looking forward to the Guvnor's visit, which we hope will occur in the order of things, although we don't "bank" very much on it. "There's always a contingency," as our friend H—— said to his son the other day, when the latter was averring that a certain steer must be dead because they'd found its bones! . . . I had a most charming parting present from —— in the shape of a corn shuck hat. They are the prettiest hats that are made, to my notion. Shucks are torn up and plaited, and then sewn up into broad-brimmed hats. I believe they are very easily made, and are very becoming, especially on a lady, when plainly and prettily trimmed.

Nov. 20, 1882.

. . . The two H—— girls and one of the boys came down to supper two evenings ago. It was a

PART VI. regular bachelors' spread, no table-cloth but plenty of sausages and soup, and coffee and bread; and afterwards we had some kind of romping game, and then blind man's buff, in which we pretty nearly shook the place down, but didn't break anything. There was nothing to break for that matter, except the things on the table, which were stowed away in one corner, the "blind-man" being warned of his proximity to it by a chorus of "Ware, soup!" So you see we've not grown so everlastingly old yet.

FROM THE DOCTOR TO MADGE.

Dec. 6, 1882.

Miss H—— has mixed a plum pudding for us, and to-night we all helped stir it, and put it on the fire, and I've got to keep it boiling till 2 a. m. to-morrow. I had a real genuine fourpenny bit, which we have mixed in with the pudding, but not one of us could raise a wedding-ring, so we had to leave that part of the ceremony out. I have begun herding again, and find I am rather out of practice, but I shall soon get into swing again. Chico and I each herd four days a week, which sounds impossible; but on Wednesday he herds bucks just to give them a change of grass, and only herds the

PART VI. flock three days. Willy has gone to bed in the April, 1882, cotton-seed house, and Chico has gone to see Miss July, 1883.^{to} H—— home, so I am quite alone with the pudding, which would be a frightful temptation if it was only cooked: but I don't think it would be worth opening in its present state. . . .

NOTE.—I had to go South early in December, 1882, and went for a ten days' visit to the ranche, arriving there about the 8th. I was duly impressed by the Christmas pudding, referred to in the last letter, which I found hanging up in its bag in "Madge's room." While I was there I began digging a well close to the house, Momo assisting, which has since been finished, and has proved a great comfort, making it no longer necessary for the boys to haul water from the creek for the use of the house. I was much struck by the improved appearance of the flock, owing to the introduction of new thoroughbred Merino blood, and the continual culling out of any of the ewes which had not been considered up to the mark.—W. H.

FROM WILLY TO MADGE.

Dec. 20, 1882.

A merry Christmas and all the rest of it. Thanks for the socks. They turned up loose at San Antonio, the parcel having busted somehow. They will be very welcome and useful I expect before winter is over, as, when we do have bad weather, of course we have to be out in it, and we haven't come

PART VI. to the extravagance of investing in anything but April, 1882,
cotton socks as yet. The Plymouth Rocks are doing July, ^{to} 1883.
finely, the laying hen having begun to sit after lay-
ing about two dozen eggs.

The Ranche,

Jan. 1, 1883.

Dear Madge,

I hope you had a jolly Christmas up there. We celebrated the day by putting a blast in the well, which resulted in blowing out what I hope will prove to be the last of the rock for some time. We are now on hard clay, which is a tremendous relief after the rock, although the latter was for only three feet or so. On Christmas afternoon, or rather at dinner-time, I went down to K——'s and had a very jolly Christmas dinner with them and the W——'s, who were staying there, preparatory to going away in the afternoon. In spite of my remonstrances, the girls made me go out riding with them, and not only that, but insisted on coming up here to "spy out the land" or something, and "went through" camp as though they were bossing the lay-out. You should have heard the burst of applause when they looked into the tent and saw Chico with sleeves tucked up, washing up some plates, &c. One exclaimed "Oh how cute!"

PART VI. Whether she referred to the dishes, or Chico, April, 1882 or the mess the tent was in, I don't know. We July, 1883^{to} are now enjoying a bit of a freeze by way of relieving the monotony, for this is the first really cold weather we've had. But it isn't disagreeable as it keeps dry. Any way, it makes one fully appreciate your socks and mittens. By the way, many thanks for the latter: I forgot about them till I turned out the Guv.'s valise, since I last wrote. Christmas night we had a supper, and *the* plum pudding, which turned out to be a decided success. The two H—— girls and their brother came down, and we had supper first, and then we filled in the cracks with socks—no, songs! My hand is cold, so my pen has the bulge on it rather. I started in with the intention of writing about half a page, so you can credit my correspondence with the balance.

CHICO TO MADGE.

Sunday, Jan. 14, 1883.

My dear Madge,

If it's not too late to thank you for the socks and the cuffs, and to wish you a merry Christmas and also a happy New Year, and many happy returns of your birthday, allow me to do

PART VI. so now. Of course, I ought to have done so before, and would be very much ashamed of myself for not doing so, were I not such a hardened sinner. April, 1882,
July, 1883^{to}

I always feel pretty chirpy now on Sunday, as it's my first day off herding. Doctor herds from Sunday till Wednesday, and I from Thursday till Saturday; but I get four days a week altogether, as I herd the bucks (about forty) every Wednesday. It's pretty hard work herding in such weather as we've had this last week. Last Sunday, Monday, and I think, Tuesday, it froze hard, and has been thawing and drizzling ever since; but to-day it's beautiful out of doors. The sheep will travel and scatter so in the bad weather, that one has to be pounding about all day without a moment's rest. I remember last Monday night, I had an overcoat which had been damp, spread over my bed, and in the night it fell off; but it was frozen so hard that it stood up on its side against the bed.

I suppose father has told you we're digging a well now. We've only gone down two or three feet since he went, but we've got through the layer of rock, which was about three feet thick. Old S—— is coming again as soon

PART VI. as he has got his crops in, some this week I April, 1882

think. There is still a good deal of rock-picking July, 1883.
to

for him to do, as the well tapers off towards the bottom rather, and he'll have to enlarge it. The well is nine feet deep at present, and it's nearly as much as one can do now to pitch the earth out with a spade; we shall have to fix a windlass. It isn't pleasant to pitch up a spade full, and have it come down on you, and get inside your shirt: however, on most days, when there's no norther blowing, it's so warm that I work down the well with nothing but a pair of breeches on—so it can't. The last time I was working in the well, I nearly shut myself in. I had shoved the ladder up to the top, and then picked down about a foot, and couldn't reach the ladder afterwards, and nobody was within call; but I managed to get it down at last by jumping as high as I could, and hooking it with the spade. . . .

The H——'s were down here on the evening of Christmas, and after supper we had singing. I thumped the wall by way of accompaniment, and we had enough noise to fill the Albert Hall. The wall of a wooden house, which is double, and has a space between, makes a first-rate drum. Our former musician, the nigger-boy

PART VI. Jeff, is gone. His music used to be rather April, 1882, trying to the nerves. His instrument was what to July, 1883. he called a mouth organ. You blow into holes in the top, and it makes a noise something like a broken-winded concertina. . . . We have still got our piece of mistletoe hanging to the beams, but it's beginning to look bilious. I expect it's rather indignant at the very small amount of slobbering that was gone through under it. . . . Has Granny painted her house yet? We've been talking of painting this one, but it has never been quite finished yet, as the carpenter has been sick. . . . We shall be getting lambs now in a short time, as I hope we're not going to have much more bad weather. I'm afraid we shall though, as we've had no winter to speak of yet, and it was prophesied we were to have a very hard one, I believe.

THE DOCTOR TO MADGE.

The Rancho,

Jan. 19, 1883.

. . . The well is getting deep, but not damp, and we are in rock again, about fifteen or more feet deep. Old S—— is reduced to blasting again, and to-day he put in a blast which went off ap-

PART VI. parently without the least effect, and, although April, 1882

the well was filled with smoke, he could not dis- July, 1883.

cover where it came from, till at last he found it oozing out of a crack in the side of the well, nearly a third of the way round. . . . I am to have my first day on the roads to-morrow, for I have never been called out before, so I hope the weather will continue fine.

WILLY TO MADGE.

The Ranche,

Feb. 28, 1883.

The Doctor got all the photos, and we all think they are great successes, except that of yourself. You look as though you'd just been told that a rival photographer had set up in R——, and were in doubt whether to believe it or not. . . . We don't wind up lambing till the beginning of April, but we're pretty far advanced I think. There are about eighty lambs or so. Spring has set in I think, though we need a few more hot days, and then some rain, before the grass will get as good as I want it. A few wild flowers are opening, and the twigs are threatening to. I'm dropping off to sleep, so good night.

WILLY TO HIS GRANDMOTHER.

The Rancho,

April 4, 1883.

PART VI. . . . We are well into spring now, and every- April, 1882.
 thing is brightening up again. We have come July, 1883.
 through a pretty hard winter, which has burst up
 a good many sheepmen; but we came through
 about as well as the best, as we had a good shed
 and plenty of hay. An Englishman below us bought
 900 head last fall; 700 died during the winter,
 and he sold the rest for 85 cts. per head (having
 given \$2 50 cts. for them). He came off better
 than some fellows though. One man went into
 winter with 1800 head, and expected about 1000
 lambs this spring. He only has 595 grown sheep,
 and six lambs now, and is about through with
 lambing. He had considerably overstocked his
 range. One of our neighbours lost over 300 grown
 sheep, and only saved about sixty lambs: he ex-
 pected to raise about 350. The losses in cattle
 also were heavy. I don't believe we lost more than
 one or two head; but our stock were raised on this
 range. . . . We shear on 16th inst. I don't expect
 you'll hear much from the boys till then.

CHICO TO HIS FATHER IN NEW YORK.

Easter Sunday (I believe), 1883.

Dear father,

PART VI.

This being my first loose Sunday this year, April, 1882, I've taken it into my head to be a good boy for July, ^{to} 1883. once in a way, and actually write a letter. . . . Thank goodness we're about through the winter at last. We haven't had a norther now for some days, but, my gracious, we did have one or two stingers! Food froze almost before we could get it down. This winter I experienced, for the first time, the unutterable bliss of getting into a frozen boot in the mornings. It's scrumptious. One can laugh at the winter now its back's turned: next year I hope we'll flummux it with a fireplace.

We've had some pretty good rains lately, and the well must have several feet, though we haven't measured it lately. The night before last there was a thunderstorm, with rain in deluges, and the wind rocked the house about, so that I lay awake and considered which window I should make for if it tipped over. However, she's standing still. There are two of us with the flock all the time now. I have been herding for the last few weeks with young darkie Jeff, and Dr. is herding now with Jeff's brother. At present I'm trying to

PART VI. get things a bit straight about camp. The place April, 1882,
gets confoundedly messed-up during the winter. to July, 1883.
However, with the help of a spade and broom, I've cleared out the tent, and kitchen, and dining-room, and am now on the pen. We've got a lot of excellent muck, which would delight your heart. I'm making a big pile of it, and we shall spread it on the pasture some time. We put down some of the pen-clearings on a patch of ground, which we marked out (shortly before you came) to try the effect, and now there is twice as much grass there as there is round about. You can see the square patch of green quite plainly marked out. I just put enough stuff down to hide the ground. . .

We haven't put up our books yet, as the carpenter hasn't come out to fix the shelves; but we shall soon be pretty straight. Willy has ordered two more wardrobes like the last, so when you next come down, by Jove you'll have to come in a topper and white weskit. The old tent pretty well came to grief this winter. It all wore away at the top, and we had to tie it up with rope, but the fly-sheet kept the rain out pretty well. We had it full of sheep most of the time, when it was cold. One night we had some up in the house, which made a pleasant concert. The lambs are much

PART VI. tamer this year than they were last, as we have April, 1882, had to feed most of them from the bottle. They're ^{to} July, 1883, beginning to look fat now, and began to dance a week ago; but before that they didn't seem to be enjoying life much. One has to go through a winter like the last, to be able to enjoy the spring properly. The green is coming on finely now, and the flowers are beginning to show up too; but it strikes me everything is much later than it was last year. Things were looking a good deal greener when I arrived here, which must have been almost the beginning of March. Devilish little news to chronicle at present, as I've been doing nothing but run after sheep and howl, for the deuce of a while. I might tell you what I said to the sheep, but it was not as a rule parliamentary. I tell you, it just knocks the stuffing out of you, herding in winter, as the sheep don't get much to eat, and, in consequence, run like the deuce; which wouldn't matter if they all ran the same way—but they don't. However, they're better now, and begin to lie down for a bit in the middle of the day. I begin to feel faint. I must drink a glass of water. I've been writing too many letters lately, I fear, and it's telling on my constitution; can't write any more, or I shall collapse.

THE DOCTOR TO HIS FATHER IN NEW YORK.

Sunday, April 29, 1883.

PART VI. It is with a delightful sense of rest that I sit April, 1882,
down to write to you to-day. It is, I believe, the to
first real day of rest I have had since the begin- July, 1883.
ning of January, and feels, in consequence, more
than usually pleasant. It is a lovely day, with
just sufficient cloud to make it cool. . . . I started a
letter to you and also one to Granny, out herding,
but being in pencil they both came to untimely
ends, through getting chafed into illegibility.
Willy and Chico have gone down to San An-
tonio with a second load of wool, so I am quite
alone. The clip this year is probably lighter than
last, owing partly to a late spring, and consequent
lack of grease; but the wool is in greater quantity,
as we have filled thirteen sacks, and have over half-
a-sack of tags besides. This is more than we had
last year, although the number of sheep shorn is
smaller . . .

The fruit-salt arrived all right, and was a very
seasonable gift, as Chico was beginning to be
more than usually irritated by tick and flea
bites, but he is all right now, and one bottle has
nearly disappeared under our frequent attacks.

PART VI. I don't think that Texas has been visited by such ^{April, 1882,} severe northers for many years as those we had ^{to} July, 1883. last January and February. Old H—— (the German) says he can remember a far worse winter—"before the war"!! and Billy A——, who was raised here, cannot remember one at all. Stock of all kinds suffered fearfully, though not so much during, as after, the norther. We ourselves came off remarkably well; which was mainly owing to Willy's foresight in weaning the calves (an unheard-of thing here), and providing unlimited feed for the sheep. I don't believe we lost a single cow, and very few sheep; but some poor fellows, who had scabby sheep, and not sufficient shelter or feed, lost all the way from thirty to seventy-five per cent. of their sheep; and Capt. —— and others, who started into winter with poor cattle, lost tremendous quantities of them. Everything that isn't dead already is now on the fair way to recovery, as the grass is splendid; and if the winter has done nothing else, it has given the old-method stock-raisers a lesson that will probably last a considerable time. . . .

Some one's theory concerning Texas northers is, that they occur on the same day, or very nearly so, every year; and as I have on various occasions

PART VI. noticed this to be the case, I should like very much to have additional proof, which I believe that Madge can supply, as it would be very useful to us if we could put any faith in the idea. I wish you would ask her to look into her diaries and old letters, and tell me the dates of—

i. The ice-norther which occurred during your stay here, in January, February, 1882.

ii. The March norther, 1882, in which Willy and I were reduced to sardines.

iii. The November (?) 1880 norther, when the icicles hung from the sheep's ears, and we had a Mexican herder.

iv. The norther which occurred during Willy's stay in Tennessee, January 7, 1881.

v. The one which occurred during Dick's stay with us, in March, 1880, about the middle of the month, I fancy. Dave was also at the ranche, breaking horses.

If Madge could give me the dates of the above-mentioned northers, it would, with those I already know, satisfy me that the theory is or is not to be relied on. . . .

WILLY TO HIS GRANDMOTHER.

The Ranche,

May 1, 1883.

PART VI. I believe the last time I wrote was before shear- April, 1882,
 ing. We have now finished that business, and the July, 1883.
 wool is all in San Antonio, except four bags, which
 I expect to take down in a few days. We had
 very fine weather during shearing, only a little
 windy. We began with two hands, then a third
 came, so, as this was slow going, I sent to
 B—— and got four more (Mexicans) out. That
 made seven shearers, so with ourselves and a
 herder we were a big crowd here for a few days.
 Our Plymouth Rock hen is raising her second lot
 of chickens; she has nine, and they are doing well.
 We had a late frost, which killed nearly all the
 plums on our only large plum-tree; but there will
 be a tremendous crop of fruit this year, I expect.
 The mulberries and dewberries are nearly ripe, and
 there will, I think, be lots of wild cherries, and I
 believe the peach-crop is all right. We have got
 several young calves, but I really don't know how
 many, as I've been so busy with other things that
 I have "lost the run" of them.

The people in B —— have just begun some im-

PART VI. provements there, by mending the road, which April, 1882, hitherto in rainy weather has been a sort of July, ^{to} 1883. mud pond. The citizens subscribed \$500 or \$600 I believe, and the last time I was in there, they were ploughing the sides of the streets from end to end, preparatory to ditching, I suppose. Our neighbour S—— and his family have moved down to his father's, on the other side of B——, so the old place I first settled on is now unoccupied, and again for sale. I brought up some Bermuda grass from San Antonio yesterday, and planted it after a very heavy shower, which came just after I got back, so I hope the grass will grow. The well still continues to be as full as ever, so the water-question does not trouble us as it used to, and the water in the well is very good.

THE DOCTOR TO MADGE.

Sunday, May 27, 1883.

. . . Chico and I went to see the polo-playing on the 13th. It was rather pretty, though I should think they have a great deal of room for improvement, as there is hardly one of them who can carry the ball with him for more than two strokes without missing it, even when there is no one else

PART VI. in the way. We have been having rather a drought April, 1882, lately, but a timely thunderstorm on Friday made July, 1883,^{to} everything fresh again.

I think I have already told you that I camp with the herder, on the other side of the creek, during the greater part of the time. As we have no stove, we cook all our food on the ground. I soon found out that it did not pay to leave things on the fire all night, as something used to come and eat them; but it was only a few days ago that I discovered the thief. It was a 'possum, and at last got so bold that it used to come out of the brush, and stand on the other side of the fire while we were having supper. So I tried to poison it by leaving little bits of poisoned bread and bacon for it, next the fire; but, though the stuff had always disappeared by morning, he was always around in the evening as well as ever, and I had to change my plans and lie in wait for him with the axe, and jump up and hit at him when he came close enough. But he was too quick for me, so, as a last resource, I went for the shot-gun, which I did'nt much like using, as it was sure to frighten the sheep. But even then I missed him, as it was too dark to aim properly, and I had to fire a bit of paper on the sight the

PART VI. next time, before firing. He is dead now, for I April, 1882,
nearly smashed his head to pieces with the second July, 1883,
cartridge, and we shall be able to cook our beans
at night without any fear of having the lid pulled
off and half of them stolen.

The sheep are doing excellently, and so are the cattle, and several of the nannie-goats are going to have kids very soon. There are only two of the last batch of kids left now, as we killed all the males to eat. . . . I have been engaged lately in making a road between the mineral spring and the creek, so as to connect the two camps, as it is awkward having to go right round by K——'s; but the earth was so dry, and the rain so sudden and hard, that a great deal of it was washed away before it had time to get sodden. The way it is made is, to cut away part of the bank, and build a little rock wall up on the lower side of the road, and fill up the gap with the loose earth and rocks, taken out from the upper part of the bank. Of course it is only a small portion of the road that needs making in that way, or the job would hardly be worth doing. . . .

WILLY TO MADGE.

The Ranche,

June 3, 1883.

PART VI. Many thanks for your letter. Of course I get ^{April, 1882,} all the news from your letters to the Dr.; so ^{to} July, 1883. it's just as well to write to him, as I know you feel like unburthening photographic lore when you write, and I'm not sufficiently initiated in the business to understand anything about it. I hope the photography progresses favorably. The next time you are here you must bring the machine down, and "take off" the ranche. . . . I had a letter from C—— the other day. They had a pretty tough time of it through winter, lost 600 head from death and straying off, and lost a good deal of wool from the scab, which was pretty bad in their flock, and had to pay \$150 damages for letting some scabby sheep get on a man's clean range, &c. C—— says he expects to buy a ranche that he knows of, and thinks his brother is going to join him. I hope he will have better luck in future. . . .

THE DOCTOR TO HIS GRANDMOTHER.

The Ranche,

June 17, 1883.

PART VI. We are having very hot weather now, and April, 1882, rather a drought, but not enough to hurt the July, ^{to} 1883. stock, although people say there will be very little corn raised in this part of the country. All the little springs and creeks are dry, and we have to water the sheep at the cotton-seed house, although they are at present penned at "the chimney" (where our house used to be before we moved it), and, as we do not like to take them over the same grass more than we can help, we only water them every two days, but they are doing very well all the same. They lie down a very long time during the day now, and have to be turned out very early and kept out very late, in order to get sufficient time to feed in; so I go out at sundown and take the flock from the herder, and keep them out for a couple of hours or so, while the herder has supper (I take mine beforehand), and take a nap during the day, to make up for it. . . . Willy has just returned from San Antonio with the book-case, which looks large enough to hold all our books, and has a large cupboard underneath as well, for

PART VI. newspapers, and so on. Now at last we shall be April, 1882,
able to unpack our books and put them where they to July, 1883.
can be got at. Willy has traded some muttons
for an old wagon, which is to be made into a
permanent sheep-camp, that is to say, it will be
fitted up instead of a tent, and have all the bed-
clothes, salt, &c., in it, and will be moved when-
ever the flock is. This will be very handy, as it is
not always convenient to use our other wagon,
and it takes a lot of time and trouble to move the
things on a horse. I am afraid you will find this
letter very full of sheep, but I am with them
nearly all the time, and so it comes more natural
to write about them than anything else. . . . I am
writing fearfully badly to-day, and, if it isn't the
heat, it must be the want of practice, which is a
judgment on me for not writing oftener. . . .

FROM WILLY TO HIS FATHER.

The Ranche,

June 20, 1883.

. . . Stock of all kinds doing finely. So much
biz. on hand to think about, that I shan't give you
any news now; in fact, I don't think there is any.
Shall be glad to see Dick. He will make himself

PART VI, at home here, and very likely see C——, who April, 1882, expects to go through, *en route* for San Antonio, July, 1883,^{to} about 1st proximo. He had heavy losses last winter, but says he is "rich in experience," and means to stick to it. . . . Those five goats are kidding again. Four of them had six kids between them last week. . . .

THE DOCTOR TO HIS GRANDMOTHER.

July 15, 1883.

. . . Dick has been staying with us lately, and has improved a good deal; he was badly in need of rest when he arrived. C—— turned up almost the same day, and stayed with us some time also, before going on to San Antonio. He passed here again on his way up country, with his younger brother, but I did not see him, as I was out all day. Dick and C—— went on a fishing excursion while they were here, and, as they were fishing with a net, they had to leave their clothes on the bank; and the cattle came up and chewed them, and one of the cows almost destroyed C——'s watch, by chewing at it till the covers were flat and the glass broken. However, I believe the works remained uninjured. Dick has arranged a

PART VI. partnership with G——, and will soon start on a April, 1882, prospecting tour through New Mexico, where he ^{to} July, 1883. expects to buy land and raise cattle.

Our cotton-seed house was getting almost uninhabitable, from the quantity of hornets which infested it, and built their nests on the roof. They used to drop on the blankets in a semi-torpid state, and sting as soon as they were touched, so I cleaned all the nests off with the crook the other day, and then fled till the excitement was over, and now I believe they have deserted the place.

The flock is looking extremely well, and will not feed much after sun-down, although the moon is half full, so it shows they get plenty to eat. I went to get up Molly the other day (the bay mare that was here when we first came out), and had no end of a run before I could catch her. She is a very clever animal, and tried hard to throw me off her trail by dodging round the clumps of brush; but I managed somehow or other to come round one side just as she was disappearing round another, and never lost sight of her till she gave in, and allowed herself to be caught. She has got a black mule colt this year, which is a very absurd-looking creature, with

PART VI. cars like a thoroughbred jackass, and tremendous joints. . . .

April, 1882,
to
July, 1883.

WILLY TO HIS GRANDMOTHER.

The Ranche,
July 16, 1883.

. . . We only settled in here just in time to secure a decent ranche. Now, buying land is a far different thing round here to what it was three years ago, and respectable locations don't go begging long for a solid business-meaning tenant and purchaser. Up to quite recently the owners and purchasers of real estate round here consisted of the old original settlers (mostly Germans), and incoming immigrants and their families. Now, the generation that was born round here, of the first settlers, is growing up, and marrying and settling down; and a very industrious and prosperous generation it is too. Having been brought up sometimes within a few miles of where they have now settled down, the young farmers go to work in the way which they have learnt is the most practical and best, right from the start; the result of which will be that the annual advancement and prosperity in these parts will be, during the next ten years, three times as great

PART VI. as it has been during the last ten. I am moralising April, 1882, to an extent that I don't often give way to, but it July, 1883.^{to} will shew you that we have a contented and hopeful view of the future.

About Bermuda grass: the first root generally mats before sending out shoots to any extent, and then, after a good rain, when the matted starting-place is well rooted, it will send out shoots from three or four sides; the joints when matured rooting in their turn, down into the ground. Perhaps this will be sufficient for you to be able to satisfy yourself as to whether your Bermuda has started or not. Certainly the roots I sent were Bermuda; but if they did not start, I will send some more. . . .

CHICO TO HIS GRANDMOTHER.

Sunday, July 22, 1883.

. . . We've been quite lively here lately with visitors. Dick has been staying at the ranche since he came from New York, except when he has been in San Antonio; and C—— was here too about a week. He came down from his ranche, which is about 125 miles off, principally, I fancy, to go to the B—— ball on the 4th of

PART VI July, and was very nearly prevented from going April, 1882, by the rain. However, he rode in enveloped in July, ^{to} 1883. a macintosh of Dick's, and got there at last, after having been brought back to camp once by the horse just as he thought he was at his destination; it was so dark he couldn't see his horse's head, and the horse didn't see the force of a three-mile ride in a deluge. The 4th and 5th were both miserable days in this country. We had had a drought for some time previously, and when the rain did come it came in buckets. It disappointed a lot of pleasure-seekers, no doubt, but it did a wonderful lot of good to the country. Our well was just running dry, we got a quart of gravel up with each bucket; but now we have about three feet of water. . . .

Dick started off two or three days ago for New Mexico with the two G——'s, looking for a good place to run cattle. They were going all the way in an ambulance, and will have a very jolly trip if they have fine weather. Dick brought three dogs down from New York with him, a Scotch deerhound and a couple of fox-terriers, one of which went mad and ran off as he was walking down from San Antonio here, when he first arrived—the sun was too much for it, I suppose. The hound he has

PART VI. taken with him on the trip, and the little fox- April, 1882,
terrier bitch he has left here till he comes back. July, 1883.
It's rather stupid at present, it will sit and look
at rabbits; however, it's young, and will know
better in time. Dick has grown awfully "high-
toned" since he's been in New York, shaves every
week, and so on! He started on the trip fully
equipped. I hope the G——'s didn't each take
as much, or I pity the horses. He had a couple
of rifles (one of which fired explosive bullets), a
full-sized shot gun, a gigantic six-shooter, about
a million rounds of ammunition, a handkerchief,
and a pair of socks.

The B—— polo club returned last week from
their trip to Austin and San Antonio, luckily
only a dollar or two out of pocket; they had
terribly bad luck. They were to play two or
three days in Austin, and expended hundreds
of dollars in getting the ground (which was full
of weeds) into order, and then it rained inces-
santly, so that I believe they only had one
day's play there; and at San Antonio they had
the same kind of luck. The 4th and 5th, as
I mentioned before, were flooded, and of course
they would have been their best days had they
been fine, as everybody would have been out

PART VI. sight-seeing. They are making arrangements to April, 1882,
play at the State fairs of Omaha, and some other July, 1883.^{to}
capitals up North, in September and October,
out of which they'll probably make a good
thing. We've been having such hot weather lately
that we always sleep on the gallery. Last night
it was full moon, and I read in bed for some
time by moonlight, it was so bright. . . . I'm so
glad to hear your 4th July celebration was a
success. Madge says you rode the mare up town:
we shall hear of your breaking in the colt next.
What swells you must be now the floor's var-
nished; I hope you've put an adequate shoe-scraper
outside. We haven't stained our floor all over
yet; but there are some good-sized blotches. . . .
We have an Englishman herding for us now, so
we get plenty of time for jobs about camp. I
have been painting all the wagon wheels lately,
and the buckboard I painted all over, as the sun
plays the dickens with them as soon as the paint
wears off. I began writing just now sitting in
a chair like a Christian, but I've gradually sub-
sided on to the floor—such is the heat. . . .

THE DOCTOR TO HIS GRANDMOTHER.

July 22, 1883.

PART VI. . . . Whenever I sleep on the ground now I use April, 1882 Chico's Spanish rug instead of a blanket, as it to July, 1883. doesn't pick up any dirt; but, as it is striped with all colours of the rainbow, it makes me look like a Mexican. I believe we shall have another calf before long, from one of our best milch-cows. We have had more calves this year than ever before, and more than half of them are heifers, which of course are more valuable than bulls. Several of the calves, whose mothers do not run near here, are not yet marked, and I am going to get them up as soon as possible, and mark them, as it is not safe to run stock out here with neither mark nor brand. I suppose that both those barbarous customs are pretty nearly obsolete in Tennessee, where there are few cattle. The only animals here that are left unmarked are horses, as it disfigures them so; but several people mark their mares (my mare is marked) in the less settled counties. . . .

THE DOCTOR TO MADGE.

July 29, 1883.

PART VI. . . . Everything is doing well here, and the crops April, 1882,
are going to turn out pretty fairly after all; but July, ^{to} 1883.
we are needing some more rain, as we have had none since the 4th of the month. Polly cracked a piece out of her hoof the other day, so we turned her out of the pasture to give her a rest; but she has been so long inside the fence now, that she wouldn't go away, and just hung round the gate till we let her in again. I ride the colt now whenever I need a horse, but he is not fast enough, nor strong enough yet, to hunt cattle with. I have just begun to quarry rocks for the back of the new shed. We intend to build a large sheep-shed down on the creek, where the present sheep camp is, and shall make the back out of rocks; but I am not quite sure yet what kind of roof it is to have. It will be a great deal handier to have a shed down there in winter, because last winter, whenever there came a big norther, we had to take the sheep up to the house; and that interfered with the cattle and bucks and everything else. It is odd that I should be writing about winter with the thermometer at

PART VI. heaven-knows-where in the shade ; but we always April, 1882,
begin preparing for winter now, so as not to be to July, 1883.
crowded at the last moment. Willy has told me that I shall probably be able to go up to you for a short while in September, but of course nothing can be certain as yet. He and I had a day's branding last week, near B——. There are six head of cattle out there of ours, that do not come up to our pen ; so we took the rope and iron down to a pen near B——, and branded them there. One of them was a large two-year-old heifer that was very wild, and made our hands sore by rushing round the pen after she was roped, and eventually jumped over the side ; but we got the brand on at last in spite of that. . . .

APPENDIX.

WHEN the Dr. was staying in Tennessee last month, with his grandmother and Madge, I suggested that he should write me a letter summing up the pros and cons of ranche life in Texas for English public-school men; and at the same time I wrote to Willy at the ranche, asking him if he had anything to add to the selections from his letters, which I had by his leave made. The following were the replies.

W. H.

New York, Nov. 21, 1883.

FROM THE DOCTOR.

.... Tennessee,

Oct. 20, 1883.

Dear Father,

Thanks for your letter of the 17th; but why can't you let me alone on G. T. T. business? I am perfectly willing to have all such extracts as you think fit taken from my letters, but I don't want to stop immigration to Kendall County, Texas, by stating what I believe to be the chances of a young fellow (without any capital) who settles there. You see, unskilled labour is very cheap; and I know very little about the profits of teaming (which requires only a small capital), by which most of the young men seem to make a start in life; and owing to my

entire ignorance of all money matters connected with our own business (except price of sheep, wool, herding, &c.), I should be a very bad authority even on the very subject which I ought to know best. I am not quite clear as to whether your question refers to money-making at all; but if not, what would you wish me to write about—climate, society, or what? I don't want to be disobliging, but I don't want to write about that of which I know but little, or to send you a letter which would be of no use. And I think a fellow would have to be very steady and economical to save \$100 a year out of his wages as herder or farm hand; which is scarcely an encouraging prospect. K——, who has worked pretty steadily with us for six months at \$15 a month and his grub, and been economical, had saved about \$35 when I left. If you want a climatic, &c., letter, please say so, and I shall be only too happy to write one. You know, your question was a little indefinite, "What can you say about your part of Texas as a country for an English public-school boy to settle in, assuming, &c.?" Ever your affectionate but puzzled son.

NOTE.—It seemed to me that this letter would answer my purpose, so I did not trouble my "puzzled son" for another, especially as he was getting only a month's holiday after four years' almost continuous work. Here I may mention that many of the letters were illustrated by their writers, and thus made more interesting and intelligible to those to whom they were addressed: should they find a publisher, and a second and illustrated edition be called for, I make no doubt that Chico would be able to spare time from his sheep to work the original sketches, whether his own or those of Willy and the Dr., into proper shape.—W. H.

FROM WILLY.

Boerne. Kendall Co., Texas,

Nov. 12, 1883.

Dear Gov.,

I have just returned from a trip to Kendalia with Mr. Vogel, who, as you know, is the founder of the new town by that name which is growing up in the eastern part of this county; and as you are always interested in matters appertaining to Texas in general, and this county in particular, I will give you an account of what was to me an exceedingly interesting trip.

Kendalia is about 23 miles N.E. of Boerne, on the road to Austin. We crossed the Guadalupe about 15 miles from here, and then, after leaving the cedar brake, had a very pleasant drive of some miles through a very pretty piece of country, passing several farms, and through as good a stock range as can be found anywhere. One of our most successful sheepmen has his ranche a few miles east of Kendalia; and horses, cattle, and goats are all raised in the neighbourhood.

We reached Kendalia about sundown, and so hadn't any time that evening to see much, as of course the horses had to be attended to, and we had to look after getting supper in Mr. Vogel's house, which stands a short distance from the road on a slight elevation above the cotton gin and mill, and almost within a stone's throw of the store and post-office.

It speaks a great deal for the intellectual attainments

of the folks in the neighbourhood that they have a debating society in full blast, with weekly meetings at the schoolhouse : they held a meeting the night we got there ; the subject, so we were told, being " The relative profits on sheep and cattle raising ; " but my thirst for the fray was so far quenched by the drive we had had, and the prospective walks and return drive next day, that, acting upon the precept that discretion is the better part of valour, I very ignominiously " turned in "—to bed. Next day we heard that the cattle stumpers had routed us poor sheepmen bag and baggage. Great Scott ! where were the sheepboys ?

Next morning, after a good night's rest and a hearty breakfast, we sallied forth to " take in " the place and surroundings, and, running the gauntlet of a host of Kendalians and others, we went down to the lake, which is a very beautiful piece of water not far from the town. Mr. Vogel has stocked it with German carp, and has ordered two rowing-boats, which he intends to place at the disposal of pleasure-seekers. The water is in many places over 14 feet deep and beautifully clear, and I had the first good plunge that I have had for some years ; as here in Texas, water that is deep enough to plunge into, except so far from the edge as to render it impossible to take a header off the bank, is a scarcity.

After returning to the town, I amused myself examining the machinery in the mill (which consists of a very fine engine, the power of which is utilised in running a cotton gin and press, grist mill and flouring mill), and strolling

out amongst the timber, which is exceedingly fine—live oak, and post oak, and all the other smaller varieties of trees and shrubs that grow in these parts, including abundance of wild grape-vines, wild cherries, and plums, &c. ; and admiring the view of the distant mountains, which are very fine, whilst Mr. Vogel was being besieged by his miller and fence-builders and other men who had business with him, and a crowd of others the chief intent of most of whom seemed to be to become the possessors of town lots. These, he tells me, he is at present selling at from \$10 to \$20 according to location, it being a significant fact that most of those tackling him for town lots were old settlers in the neighbourhood, which shews that those who have the best facilities for judging, have perfect confidence in the future success of the town.

Mr. Vogel watches the growth of the town with an interest almost akin to enthusiasm, and not (as do so many of the inaugurators of similar projects) as a speculative venture; and he is therefore of course always ready to assist any individual enterprise on the part of the settlers which may tend towards the general advancement and prosperity of the town and community. By the way, Mr. Vogel has so many details to attend to in connection with Kendalia, and also the "Union Land Register," of which, I believe you know, he is editor, that he intends to sell the cotton gin and mill which he built and has been running himself. So if you know of any one coming to these parts with some capital, whom such an investment would suit, send him along to Mr. Vogel at Boerne.

I think it a first-rate opening for an energetic go-ahead man, standing as it does in the centre of a very good farming district, the acreage of which is being annually increased, and in a young town surrounded by a fine stock-raising country, which, coupled with the farming interests, ensures for it a steady growth and future success. Added to this I think it has a great future as a health resort, lying as it does at an altitude of 1400 feet above the sea-level, and having so many varied natural attractions. Mr. Vogel intends as soon as practicable to build an hotel there for pleasure and health seekers. During my trip to and from Kendalia I came across some very fine specimens of mesquite grass, one of which I had not noticed before, and which I as usual took specimens of, and have been busy planting out in the pasture to-day.

All the stock is doing well, and a good rain last night promises to help the range immensely.





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