

14 *Over the Rocky Mountains to Alaska.*

the delicious temperature of the highlands, as we approached the Rockies and had our first glimpse of Pike's Peak in its mantle of snow: the muddy rivers, along whose shores we glided swiftly hour after hour: the Mississippi by moonlight—we all sat up to see that—or the Missouri at Kansas City, where we began to scatter our brood among their far Western homes. At La Junta we said good-bye to the boys bound for Mexico and the Southwest. It was like a second closing of the scholastic year; the good-byes were now ringing fast and furious. Jolly fellows began to grow grave and the serious ones more solemn; for there had been no cloud or shadow for three rollicking days.

To be sure there was a kind of infantile cyclone out on the plains, memorable for its superb atmospheric effects, and the rapidity with which we shut down the windows to keep from being inflated balloon-fashion. And there was a brisk hail-storm at the gate of the Rockies that peppered us smartly for a few moments. Then there were some boys who could not eat enough, and who turned from the dessert in tearful dismay; and one little kid who dived out of the top bunk in a