

every danger and suffered many vicissitudes in their search for new homes.

The name, the West, to one who has traversed the prairies and lived amidst the solemn grandeur of the Rockies at once recalls to mind enchanting memories of illimitable breezy stretches of plain of richest green or else dull dusty brown,—the glorious sunrises and sunsets across those swelling seas of grass once alive with tribes of merciless Indians, and thundering with the tread of countless hordes of buffalo, elk and antelope,—and of the noble mountains, silent and beautiful, whose rich treasure-houses, men fearless and resolute, are searching out and despoiling, reaping full reward for privations, losses, danger, in the countless wealth here poured out so bounteously. The West has a strong fascination for young men, offering as it does a life of perfect freedom and independence besides endless possibilities for success.

After the completion of a course at McGill the writer spent several years as a mining engineer in one of the most famous, as well as picturesque, mining towns in Colorado, and he has been tempted to write about such a life, giving a short sketch that may be of interest.

The founding of this town was incident to the discoveries near the top of the range, near the present city of Leadville, where issued the tremendous rush of men in 1878-9 where over sixty thousand people crowded into the new city of shanties, and many, unaccustomed to such an altitude, and unable to procure sufficient shelter, died of pneumonia in the streets, while many others were shot and robbed by foot-pads until the Vigilance Committee, the stern and hot salutary force in a new country, gave some members of this predatory profession short shrift and hung them up as a grim warning. In many a Western town the banding together of the firm, resolute, law respecting citizens as vigilantes has proved a great blessing. They never hesitated in meting out speedy punishment, nor did they make many mistakes, and law and order were established where before had reigned complete lawlessness and desperadoism.

When the limestone strata at Leadville (then known as California Gulch) were discovered in 1878 to be extremely rich in silver and lead, a new and extensive field was opened up to the intrepid prospector and miner, who hitherto had searched only in the granite or volcanic rocks for veins, or in the gravel beds and sand bars for gold. Along the range, then, hurried the excited bands of prospectors, tracing out and testing this new ore zone, while some, still bolder, crossed the continental Divide to the Pacific side, to hunt out and prospect the blue limestone there, entering the country of the warlike Utes who fiercely resented the white man's invasion.

A small band of miners having crossed the range at Independence Pass, and followed down the Roaring Fork of the Grand River, to where the limestone succeeded the granite, they went in to camp one night near the river, cutting out among the small aspen trees room for their tents. At this place was found good indications of silver ore and the first claims were located,

while more men were quickly attracted to the new camp, which soon became known as Aspen. For three or four years no very large ore body was discovered, but in 1884, a man with a lease on a claim with only six weeks remaining before its expiration opened up a wonderfully large body of very rich ore, and in these six weeks took out \$1,100,000 worth of ore. This mine, the "Aspen," has since produced over ten millions, and one of the lucky owners is a Canadian.

In 1888, after encompassing difficulties by triumphs in engineering truly daring and heroic, two railroads reached this now booming mining camp, and shortly after this the writer was thus saved the uncomfortable but exciting ride by stage coach over the Divide from Leadville.

Aspen is now a town, or rather a "mining city," of 11,000 people, possessing all the accessories of a modern city—water-works, electricity, street cars, good hotels, and fine theatre, large public buildings, a goodly number of well-filled churches, large and well equipped schools, while there are many very pretty residences, some beautifully furnished. More mines of great richness have been discovered, and the list is constantly growing until the year's out-put has reached \$10,000,000, making Aspen the greatest silver camp in the world.

It is wrong to believe that in a Western mining town one meets continually with danger and lawlessness, that personal rights are boldly disregarded, while the revolver, or "gun," as it is called, is ever ready and forth coming as a very potent arbiter. The advent of a railroad into nearly every town, bringing a better class of men, has driven away most of that class of wild, reckless fellows, many of them outlaws and criminals, or else has compelled them to be law-abiding citizens, and the "bad-man" business has rather ceased to be tolerated, while the man who has "killed a man" keeps this fact well in the dark as a little affair better concealed than made a boast. Even the willful, fun-loving cowboy with promiscuous shooting predilections, when moved to deeds of daring by the influence of the fiery liquor, now restrains his feelings when he comes into town, or else he is speedily taken in charge by one of the Marshall's emissaries, whose threatening gun, in case of resistance, seldom fails to "round him up" and make him a very meek and docile follower to the local Bastille. Unless one is going back into the lonely parts of the mountains, where any emergency may arise, it is much safer and more comfortable to be quite unarmed, as everyone strictly minding his own affairs will suffer little, if any, molestation.

Life in a mining camp offers many new features and permits many fresh sensations. Every man comes to the mountains confident of winning fortune's smile, eager to follow up every fair opportunity, to bear hardships, if needs be, to win success. Here are graduates from all the great universities, members of old and honored families, men ready to don blue jeans and long boots, to shove a mine car, or handle a drill. Often on stopping at a lonely cabin up in the mountains, one will find men, in rough miner's garb, of rare intelligence and education who are pinning their faith