

arrived home on a fleeting visit from his ranch in Western Canada, and being just in time for the christening, had insisted upon bestowing upon his little god-daughter a pretty name and a haunting suggestion.

Alberta West! Such was the conjunction of the breezy gentleman's choice, and possibly he dreamed, for in those days he was young and hopeful, that he would make his sister's baby-girl a Western heiress indeed.

Alberta had day-dreamed vaguely as a little girl—dreams in which she figured delightfully as a cow-girl heroine, modelled on primitive impressions from discursive reading—but she had never thought seriously of her uncle's generous intentions.

The intentions, be it said, were genuine enough, though no one ever counted on them very much. Alberta was three-and-twenty when the mountain heaved and brought forth a mouse. That is to say, poor, harmless, procrastinating Uncle Richard, who had not written home for ten years, died suddenly, and Alberta, his niece and god-daughter, was the poorer for an uncle she had never seen to remember, and the richer for an estate represented by—two town-lots in the City of Sunshine.

If she had been expecting a fortune, she might have been disappointed. As it was, she was very much surprised and very much pleased. She tried to be grieved at Uncle Richard's death, failed to realise any very genuine regret, and became deeply interested in the Dominion of Canada, the Province of Alberta, and the City of Sunshine.

Fully to realise and enjoy the pleasant position of