

— most of them. They had had a taste of the tropics on the way; paroquets and Panama fevers were their portion; or, after a long pull and a strong pull around the Horn, they were comparatively fresh and eager for the fray when they touched dry land once more. There was much close company between decks to cheer the lonely hours; a very bracing air and a very broad, bright land to give them welcome when the voyage was ended—in brief, they had their advantages.

The pioneers of Denver town were the captains or mates of prairie schooners, stranded in the midst of a sealike desert. It was a voyage of from six to eight weeks west of the Mississippi in the old days. The only stations—and miserably primitive ones at that — lay along Ben Holliday's overland stage route. They were far between. Indians waylaid the voyagers; fires, famine and fatigue helped to strew the trail with the graves of men and the carcasses of animals. Hard lines were these; but not so hard as the lines of those who pushed farther into the wilderness, nor stayed their adventurous feet till they were planted on the rich soil of the Pacific slope.

Pioneer life knows little variety. The