

THE STRAGGLERS.

I.

The descriptive literature published by the great transportation companies who handle the North American passenger, immigration, tourist and cargo trade, makes fascinating reading. It is with the facts about the land and its resources, crammed into attractively readable folders, more redolent of the spirit of the land than anything that could be writ or sung.

It is the great trumpet blast to the army of coming feet, the steel grip of friendship held out to willing hands. It is the apotheosis of success en masse, and the laudatory of individual enterprise. It is also the first line in the epic of a coming people, and the last in the elegy of a passing race.

One might on the strength of years of living the life, the earnest wrangling with words, the blackening of good foolscap paper hope to embody some of the spirit of it all, to find that there is better reading in a simple, yellow-bound time table.

What is the greater thing, the train that blazed the Prairie, crawled over the Rockies and dipped into the Pacific, or its human cargo set down all along the line?