

THE BLACK WOLF'S BREED

Thicker than men at arms, it stands awhile erect where the shallow sea waves foam and fret; then climbing higher ground, it straggles away, thinner and thinner, in oaken-shaded solitudes long innocent of sun.

Beginning on the slopes, a vast mysterious forest, without village, path, or white inhabitant, stretches inland far and away beyond the utmost ken of man. There the towering pines range themselves in ever-receding colonnades upon a carpet smooth and soft as ever hushed the tread of Sultan's foot. Dripping from their topmost boughs the sunlight's splendor flickers on the floor, as if it stole through chancel window of some cool cathedral where Nature in proud humility worshiped at the foot of Nature's God.

It was in those wilds, somewhere, the fabled El Dorado lay; there bubbled the fountain of eternal youth; through that endless wilderness of forest, plain and hill flowed on in turbid majesty the waters of De Soto's mighty grave.