

with-h.' I came west-t, and stayed three years-s. Then I paid a visit to Montreal-l. I hunted-d up as many of those doctors-s as had not died-d during my absence-e. They examined me again-n, and were astonished-d. They said-d: 'Stimson-n, my bucko-o, cheer up-p, you have now three lungs-s.' It is a great climate-e." Then catching sight of me he exclaimed "Hello! boy-y. Let's hitch up-p." We hitched up and drove off, with a miscellaneous collection of ranch necessities stored about and behind us.

It was great. The railroad faded into the distance, the fences disappeared. Bunches of cattle dotted the yellow rolling lands, and now and again a coyote, loping leisurely over the grassy slopes, would squat and look at us—then lope onward again. Far in the south the Porcupine hills swelled purple, and the mountains took on vaster portions as we climbed the ever-ascending trail towards the Bar U headquarters. Like the carpenter and the oysters in "Alice in Wonderland," we talked of many things, till the gathering night merged the mountains, the foothills and the grazing lands into one black blur.

Squash—h-s-s! With a plunge and a lurch our "democrat" swung into the ford across the north fork of High River; the bronco team stumbling and lunging to the western bank, hauled us out and broke into a gallop, for home was near. In the darkness the Major sang cheerily: "Oh, we'll wander through the wild woods, and we'll hunt the buffalo-o-o." Another sudden plunge; with the team apparently sitting on their tails, and the brake grating. Before us gleamed the lights of the Bar U headquarters just twenty-five miles from the station.

One never realizes how good the West is till one returns after years spent in other parts. The breadth of things, the height of things, the magnificent distances, are exhilarating. Men shout in the very joy of living. Early, early in the morning after my arrival on the ranch, I was afoot, and, gaining a vantage point upon a high

bluff, looked about me. The sun had not yet risen, and the great mountains in the west gloomed huge and cold against the trailing shadows night had left behind. To the east, to the south, to the north, the land fell away and away in colourless recession, and was lost in the gray of the dawning. Below, in the valley, the ranch buildings were hardly discernible. Of a sudden the highest peaks of the mountain snows were lit with a rosy flash, that spread, and grew, and flamed all along the west, till the whole range seemed as a mighty sea of glittering violet and rose, enchanted into everlasting stillness by its own beauty. Brighter and whiter grew the light, and spreading downward the foothills were touched with varying purples, while the whole prairie land became an ocean of colour. A living glory swept across the east, defining sharply the low line of the plains, save at one spot too bright for the eye to rest upon. There the sun shouldered above the rim of the world, and I turned my steps to the valley. Here, too, the magic painter had been at work. The swift-running river flashed blue behind the sombre log buildings and the dark trunks of the rugged poplars, all dressed in shimmering gold in honour of the autumn. The ranch was astir. The saddle horses were being herded in from the pasture, and smoke curled blue from the Major's house and the men's quarters. And there was the Major himself in conversation with a weather-stained cow-puncher.

"Boy, you're in luck," he said, turning towards me, "the round-up will be in the valley to-day-y."

"Hallelujah!" I answered, and went to breakfast.

During the meal the Major informed me that an animal named BX was destined to be my especial steed, and that Ewing would get him for me. As I intended to take snap-shots from the saddle for the purpose of illustrating this article, it was impossible to regard BX in any other light than that of a photographic tripod; so I went to find Ewing. The only moving object in