

Trails to Two Moons 19

the fall round-up, five, six — a dozen must needs mushroom along Main Street. And in the saloon, as nowhere else, caste lines were laid down in increasing bitterness. The Capitol, over whose bar Till Driscoll's 2800-pound steer spread his six-foot span of horns as a sign for the faithful, was exclusively the drinking place of the cattle clan; a sheep herder put his foot on dynamite when he eased it against the Capitol's rail. By the same code a cow-puncher never visited the Granger or the Homesteader unless his credit at the Capitol was utterly depleted; then he gave his patronage to the pariah barkeepers with an air of condescension.

Main Street, as Old Man Ring saw it this day of his coming to town, was a block wide and four long. False fronts of tin and wood reared themselves gawkishly over one and two-story pine stores. Here and there a lot given over to tumbleweed gaped like a missing tooth. To right and left of Main Street houses of the townspeople — for the most part tarpapered boxes extravagantly painted in ocher and blues — trailed down to hide among the cottonwoods along the banks of the streams, where some Crow families had their tepees.