

Southbound



At last the talisman is in my hand, and the beginning of the end of the long daydream draws near. I have for years longed to make a trip from the 49th parallel to the Mexican border, with occasional bolder thoughts of even venturing into that region of leisure and revolution.

The talisman is a brown railroad ticket, one of the delightful kind that unfolds like a concertina, and so reaches from hand to shoulder, on the principle that the longer the ticket, the longer the ride.

The kindly members of my thoughtful household have packed my trunk with practiced skill, and I am called to listen to the principle on which it has been done; what articles go here, and what there, so that I may lay my hand on any article in the dark. I listen, a species of coma stealing over my brain, as I know that after my first stopover, confusion will reign therein in an adverse ratio to its present smug tidiness.

At the G. N. R. depot, Vancouver, B. C., as I approach the Plutonic porter of the parlor car posing in somber dignity at the car step, I have a guilty feeling that he eyes me with a certain suspicion that I will attempt to enter the car unclad in the authority of the proper ticket. I hasten to dispel this illusion, and he unbends enough to permit me to enter and to transport my own baggage.