

From Livingston two engines head the train up the steep grade among butte-like foot-hills abounding with jutting crags and ribs of rock, and partly clad with stunted spruce. Up, and up we climb, till we are over 5,000 feet above the level of the sea. We have come a dozen miles and are about to enter the Bozeman Tunnel, so all the windows are closed and the lamps are lighted. This tunnel is slightly under three quarters of a mile in length, but it seemed like several miles that we were speeding under the mountain and breathing the stifling air. To emerge into the sunshine where we could fling open the windows and enjoy the fresh breeze was a welcome relief.

Descending a narrow defile, known as Rock Canyon, we reach Fort Ellis—a vigorous military post—where begins the valley of the Gallatin. Ever widening to the west, at Bozeman this valley expands into a rich and beautiful plateau which, with the accessory of irrigation, is now “blossoming like the rose,” and big with promise of a generous harvest. For several hours we traverse this fertile and favoured valley. It is the garden of Montana; and, for a dozen miles on either hand, it stretches its gentle undulations between the sheltering ranges seen in the mellow distance. Now the valley walls draw in, and close beside the track flows the Gallatin River—a merry stream which runs, with us, an ever-losing race. Sheep-ranching is here carried on very extensively; and this is shearing time. At one place there is gathered, in a corral, a flock of several thousand, and a large gang of shearers are hard at work in a pen upon the river-bank—judging from the quick succession in which the fleeces pass to the packing scaffold, where they are stowed in the familiar, bulky woolsacks, ready for shipment. We take our last view of the Gallatin as it turns across the pretty valley to blend its waters, yonder, with the Madison and Jefferson to form the Missouri; which, thus triply endowed, flows hence three thousand miles to join the Mississippi. We have come six hundred miles since we crossed the Missouri, flowing southward, and here the new-born river starts on a northward pilgrimage for a hundred miles or more. We have entered the first canyon of the Missouri, and the stream which flows beside us is a beautiful river of clear water which sparkles as it flows over its pebbly bed. In this canyon we traverse the Horse-shoe Bend; a very choice bit of country.