

## THE CUSTOM OF THE COUNTRY

and their beds on the horse behind; but though she knew they were quitting, she stood silent and made no sign.

"Want to say good-by?" inquired Brig, glancing up at her from under his hat, but Bowles did not reply. A deadly apathy had succeeded his passion, and he was sullen and incapable of higher thoughts. All he wanted now was to get away—after that he could think what to do.

They turned their horses' heads toward Chula Vista, where they must go to draw their time, and after they had ridden a mile Bowles suddenly turned in his saddle—but Dixie had passed inside. A deep and melancholy sadness came over him now, and he sighed as he slumped down in his seat, but Brigham did not notice his silence. At noon they ate as they rode, getting a drink at a nester's windmill, and at night they camped by a well. Then it was that Bowles woke up from his brooding and saw that he was not alone in his mood—Brigham, too, was downcast and wrapt up in his thoughts. His mind ran quickly back to ascertain the cause, and he remembered the cherished job.

For one short, eventful month Brigham Clark had been a boss. A straw-boss, to be sure, but still a boss—and now he had lost his job. Never again, perhaps, would he rise to the proud emi-