

CHAPTER IV.

FOLKS AROUND SUNSHINE-SHADDER.

TWO TRAVELLERS AND A REMINISCENCE WITH A SIGNIFICANCE.

ONE sweltering day in July the Kinglyville local slowed up with puffs, gurgles and groans at a wayside station and fretfully awaited the ascent of a middle-aged female who mounted the steps with elephantine precision.

Breathless and perspiring, she labored into the crowded first-class and deposited herself, valise, basket and umbrella beside a young man who, despite the hot and dusty coach, looked cool and immaculate in a neat-fitting suit of grey.

"I'm thet het up 'n' mos' fagged out," she exclaimed breathlessly, as she arranged herself expansively in the seat.

"Hot day," her companion returned, indifferently.

"Yes, 'tis; 'n' it'll be a wonner if it don't thunner afore long. Be ye goin' ter Sunshine-Shadder?"

"No," he answered shortly, as he drew himself up half protestingly and fixed his eyes upon a black osprey which dangled its jets forlornly on a cream straw bonnet in the seat ahead.