

break, or the breeching should give way; if *facilis est descensus* might be freely translated into a rough and tumble descent into a canyon, where could we find a quieter spot in which to await the sounding of the last trumpet? Where a more magnificent mausoleum than that great canyon? Where a grander headstone than Mount Stephen while the Columbia would chant for us a perpetual requiem, and the good Saskatchewan would clasp us lovingly in her arms, and scare the coyotes and the mountain wolves from their prey? The answer was as old as the time of Homer. You will remember that Achilles says he would rather be on earth the meanest herdsman of Admetus, than be in death the greatest king that ever reigned in Hades. A magnificent mausoleum down there may be all very fine, but I would much rather be with my poor little girl in Montreal. I may state that the danger of a descent was more apparent than real, and that it is the intention to obviate the necessity of descending this pass by the construction of a tunnel which can be done at a comparatively trifling cost. The next morning we visited the Golden City, the point where the Kicking Horse joins the Columbia River. The weather was very fine, and as we walked a portion of the way we had a very pleasant time. The scenery here is very grand. Far up the mountain side we saw tote roads over which innumerable teams were drawing supplies for the railway. Every now and then the carcass of an animal marked the spot where a mis-step had been made. We crossed the Kicking Horse eleven times, passing through four tunnels. Some of the bridges were not unlike that of Al-Sirat. In Golden City we found one of those mountain settlements so graphically described by Bret Harte. Railway men, Mounted Police, hunters, gamblers, miners and Indians form a strange social conglomerate. We saw the outcasts of Poker Flat; we shared in the luck of Roaring Camp; Miggles and Mlies appeared in bodily form before us. I wished to form the acquaintance of Brown of Calaveras, and Tennessee's partner, but as they were engaged in a protracted game of draw, whatever that might be. I could not do so. The scenery in this vicinity was very wild and grand. The white crests of the Selkirk Range in the distance, the flashing river below, the mountains raising their heads towards heaven, the strange inhabitants of Golden City—all formed a picture which Bierstadt or our own Canadian Forbes, alone could paint. Bret Harte's lines breathe the very spirit of this wild region:

"Above the pines, the moon was slowly drifting,
The river sang below,
The dim Sierras far away uplifting
Their minarets of snow.
The roaring camp fires, with rude humor painted
In ruddy tones of health,
The haggard face and form of those who fainted
In the fierce race for wealth."

There was a little cemetery on the mountain side in which was a newly made grave. We were told that a few days before a man had passed in his cheques: that is, had been shot. It was said to have been a case of self-defence, of wild western justice. The victor had been admitted to bail, pending his trial in a higher court, and was now working in sight of the little mound which marked the spot where the vanquished was so quietly sleeping. We were much impressed with the appearance and soldierly bearing of the detachment of Mounted Police at this place, under the command of Captain Steele. We thought that these brave young Canadian soldiers were a credit to the country and the service to which they belonged. The officers appeared to be admirably fitted for their difficult and trying positions, and we were assured they were officers and gentlemen, in the highest and best sense of the word. We heard of many instances of their bravery and dauntless courage, and also of their coolness in dealing with the fierce western Indian and

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the fiercer whites of those regions; we were assured it was impossible to estimate too highly the services which this force has rendered to the cause of law and order in these western isles. I say this the more willingly, because it appears to me at this time the force is under a cloud which I trust will be soon dispelled. Here I may perhaps be permitted to say a few words regarding the railway itself. It appeared to me that the manner in which this road has been constructed through the rocky mountains was one of the modern engineering marvels; the courage, practical ability, and engineering skill, displayed in the performance of this most difficult work, is, I believe, unparalleled in railway history. In Mr. James Ross the company have secured the services of a gentleman admirably fit to cope with the difficulties of the situation. The great success achieved by him in the Rockies will doubtless be followed by like results in the Selkirk Range. So far as the railway generally is concerned, I should say that not only has it been constructed with extraordinary rapidity, but in a most substantial and workmanlike manner. The testimony of all with whom we came in contact was that the General Superintendent, Mr. Egan, and the officers generally of the western section were not only men of great practical ability, who thoroughly understood their business, and who also are endowed with a spirit of kindness and courtesy to the general public, which is worthy of all praise. The same may be said of Mr. McTavish and the officers of the Land Department. Well, we had reached the end of the track. We had had an exceedingly pleasant journey, but we had failed in one object of our mission. We expected to follow the grizzly to his lair and to obtain some of the spoils of the chase. There was a mysterious disappearance of one of our party, who wished to secure the skin of a grizzly, but his search was in vain, and he returned to us a sadder and wiser man. On our way back, we remained a few hours at Regina, where we received a warm welcome from many old friends. Thence we proceeded to Winnipeg, thence down the Kaministiquia, passing on our way that historical building, the Neebing Hotel; thence, after a pleasant voyage around that magnificent sheet of water, Thunder Bay, we landed at the prosperous town of Port Arthur. The scenery in this vicinity is exceedingly romantic and beautiful. Although the country adjoining it is somewhat broken and undulating, we were assured that in addition to its unlimited wealth it possesses in some parts agricultural capabilities not unlike those of the famous Eastern Townships. I have a vision of a splendid building composed of the red stone of that region, perched on the great eminence which overlooks that magnificent sheet of water, where letters and customs will combine to add to the prosperity of the inhabitants of this region. Thence we went to Nepigon, passing over a portion of the famous bridge which is one of the finest structures of this kind that I have ever seen. It is composed of the red stone of that region, and its appearance is very beautiful. Thence back to Port Arthur, where we had a most hearty welcome, and so home. I will give briefly my own impression of the country through which we passed. Some time ago, I read in an American paper a statement which will apply to the country we are now considering. A distinguished American statesman, who resides in the vicinity of Boston, lost by death a young and beautiful wife to whom he was devotedly attached. Brooding over her loss, he would not be comforted, although many a fair consoler offered to supply her place. With the enterprising and adventurous spirit of his race, he determined to follow her into the celestial, as Orpheus did his bride into the tropical regions. Accordingly he consulted a famous medium, who was armed with all the powers of modern mystical science, and by the process of what is termed materialisation she stood in all her pristine beauty before him. The interview was very tender and touching, and can be better imagined than