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COMING THROUGH THE SELKIRKS

"May I get up and ride with you for a few miles?" This to a C. P. R. locomotive engineer on one of the mountain divisions, who had just attached his engine to our train. We stood for a moment facing one another after he had drawn himself out from between the arms of one of the driving wheels. Each held in his hand an emblem of his position. He a huge "oiler," and I a lead pencil intended to substantiate my statement of a newspaper article to be.

Manhood heeds no masks, and perhaps there is no better place to prove it than in a transcontinental train: neither spotted jeans and stiffened joints nor monacles and knickerbockers and a plethora of watch-guard can deceive any but the unobservant. He was a man. Plainly a Scot. A face speaking at once of a good humor that would delight in caressing a child and uncalculating courage to ride out on a winter's night through the thick of a whirling tempest of mountain snow to meet the treacherous perchances of a region where no

law or order is to be perceived in nature by either the sight of the eye or the impression of the mind.

"Yes, if you have a permit from the superintendent."

The scene was one of those little mountain stations that, once pictured on the memory, is never erased. Mountains—calm, exasperatingly calm, and pure—look down. A serene ethereality seems to come from the high associations of cloud and sunshine. Even as one gazes, they partially withdraw into the heaven beyond, and if again they appear, one could only fancy them to chide the grossness of the busy black little creatures that in the valley beneath rush to and fro and ply their earthy traffic. But they deign no voice, except it be to toss back again a mocking answer to the salute of the locomotive, which, vain of its power, would dare measure itself—a man-made thing—against the strength of these "eternal hills" or the force of the cataract over which it passes with a loud roar of triumph. The locomotive stands throbbing in a suppressed and discontented way. The English tourist, just returning from a summer in Northern Japan, paces to and fro in that complacent fashion that so strikes the admiration of Tommy Tompkins, the post office clerk. He rams his hands into his trousers pockets, too, and looks at the scenery with "Come-now-name-your-price" air. The amateur photographer is there preparing for that winter evening story, beginning, "When I was out west this summer—Ah, by the way, here are a few pictures."

The engineer at last has finished his preparations; a last round, however, wrench in hand, and he is ready to start. The fireman feeds into the ample fire-box