

Now this was the way in which our Bell proceeded to take possession of that tempting property that was waiting for her at Colorado. She was never tired of suggesting that we should go to this place and that place, rather than that her legitimate curiosity should be satisfied as to her new home. Her eyes went down to New Orleans, and then went up to Montreal, but were scarcely ever turned due west. And when we, who rather feared that she was proposing these diversions for our sakes alone, remonstrated with her, and pointed out that she would have ample opportunity of visiting the great lakes and Canada on her way back at the expiry of her year of banishment, you should have seen the light that came suddenly into her face. She seemed already to imagine herself free.

'Take a roundabout way home?' exclaimed the young matron, with proud eyes. 'I think not. The moment my year is out, you will see if I don't come home straighter than any crow that ever flew. If I could only go up to the top of the mountains—and spread my wings there—and make one swoop across the plains, and . . . other swoop across the Atlantic—'

'Stopping at New York, of course, for a biscuit.'

'—you would see how soon I should be in England. Just fancy the first evening we shall spend all together again. Lady Sylvia, you will come to us that evening?'

'I hope so,' said Lady Sylvia, with a startled look—she had been dreaming.

And so, in pursuit of these idle vagaries we left West Point and ascended the Hudson a bit by boat, and then landed and got into a train which most kindly kept by the side of the river as it whirled us along. The carriage was a comfortable one, with arm-chairs on pedestals by the windows, and with small tables for our books, fruit, and what not; and while the lieutenant had passed along to the smoking-car to have a cigar and some iced drink on this blazing hot day, the women-folk amused themselves by spreading out on the table a whole store of trinkets belonging to a youthful merchant attached to the car, and by selecting a vast number of perfectly useless presents for people at home. It was an agreeable occupation enough, to connect the names of those who were far away with those bits of ivory and photograph frames and puz-

zles; and Queen T— faithfully undertook to deliver all these little gifts with appropriate messages. The representation that they were going to carry those trumpery things about with them all over America, that their boxes would be encumbered, that the things themselves would be broken, and that the proper time for purchasing presents was just before sailing from New York, met with that absolute indifference which was generally accorded to the advice of a person who had by this time subsided into the position of being a mere chronicler of the doings of the party, and who had found out that in this land of liberty it was as unsafe for him to open his mouth as it was in his own home in England.

'My dear Lady Sylvia,' said Queen T—, as this Swiss-looking railway-car was rumbling along towards Saratoga through a dusty and wooded country that looked parched enough under the blue sky, 'I guess I feel just real mean.'

Lady Sylvia's eyes asked what this extraordinary language meant.

'Don't you?' she continued. 'Here we are going into Saratoga in the company of a ranch-woman, a farmeress, a stock-raiser, a bowie-knifer. What was it the judge said in New York about Saratoga?—that we should find there "a blaze of wealth, beauty, and culture such as was not to be found in any capital in Europe?" and of course it would have been bad enough in any case for us simple country-folk to go into such a whirl of fashionable life; but with one of the wild desperadoes of Colorado—what will they think of us?'

'I guess you want a tarnation lickin',' said the stock-raiser, calmly. 'Buffalo Jack, where's my cowhide?'

Buffalo Jack, being immersed in timetables, would pay no heed to her nonsense; but Lady Sylvia was heard to say that the conduct of a ranch-woman in coming to Saratoga was deserving of respect rather than ridicule, for she no doubt would learn something of manners before going back to her bowie-knives and cattle.

What, then, was this big, busy town through which we drove, with its broad thoroughfares, deep dust, green trees, and huge hotels?

We look at the jewellers' shops and the *cafés* and the promenaders, and one cries out, 'Baden-Baden!'