

XLIV.

Steddy an' heavy—a slingin' lope ;
A hefty critter with biggish bones
Might make jest sich—could hear the hoofs
Es they struck on the rattlin', rollin' stones—
The jingle of bit—an' clar an' shrill
A whistle es ever left cowboy's lip,
An' cuttin' the air, the long, fine hiss
Of the whirlin' lash of a cowboy's whip.

XLV.

I crowded the mustang back, ontill
He riz on his haunches—an' I sed,
"In the Maker's name, who may ye be?"
Sez a vice, "Old feller, jest ride ahead!"
"All right!" sez I, an' I shook the rein.
"Ye've turn'd the herd in a hansum style—
Whoever ye be, I'll not back down!"
An' I didn't, neither,—ye bet yer pile!

XLVI.

Clus on the heels of that unseen hoss,
I rode on the side of the turnin' herd,
An' once in a while I answer'd back
A shout or a whistle or cheerin' word—
From lips no lightnin' was strong tew show.
'Twas sort of scareful, that midnight ride ;
But we'd got our backs tew the gulch—fur that
I'd hev foller'd a curiouser sort of guide !