

for the culture of wheat and all other products. They are centres of great agricultural districts, and their future prosperity is undoubted. When we went to bed that night, the ground was covered with snow; when the morning dawned we were in another clime. At nightfall winter lingered in the lap of autumn; in the morning spring clasped us in her warm embrace. The air was pleasant and balmy; the sun was shining brightly; the change was as though it had been caused by magic. We had reached the country where the Chinook winds exercised their benign influence. We saw some herds of antelopes, and the scenery in the vicinity of Calgary and the country drained by the Bow River was very fine. The country, so far as one could judge from the cars, was very beautiful and pleasant, and seemed to be admirably fitted for pasture. We saw the sheep ranches of Senator Cochrane, and its flocks seemed to be in good order. About noon we had our first glimpse of the Rocky Mountains. A long line of silver, marking the limit of the great prairie ocean, a long line of coast over which the white waves were perpetually breaking. As we moved along swiftly and silently, a change came over the landscape, a strange mirage appeared to pervade the atmosphere. One could understand how the famous *fata morgana* had startled the hunters and travellers in these lonely regions. As we advanced the forms which the clouds and the mountains assumed became still more strange, weird and fantastic. In the folk lore of almost every nation there is a reference to some lost city, some mysterious land, which has disappeared from sight, but which at some unexpected moment dazzles the eye of the hunter and traveller and then disappears in the same strange manner. Plato gives us a glimpse of this in his lost island of Atlantis. In Hypatia Mr. Kingsley tells us how the fierce Berseker came from the frozen regions of the North and ascended the Hot Nile in search of the lost city of Asgard. Mr. Washington Irving has reproduced the story in his *Adelantado* of the seven cities. And there is a beautiful Irish legend which tells us how the fishermen, off the Isle of Arran, see rising from the waves the beautiful towers and gardens of Hy-Brasail, the lovely island of the blest. As we move towards that glittering mountain range, we could understand how it was that poets and painters had not even attempted to depict those mountain solitudes. With every chance of movement there came a change in the magnificent panorama which was unrolled before us. Magnificent cities, with gorgeous palaces and cloud-capped towers, and great cathedrals appeared on every side. Now the grand and substantial architecture of the great European cities loomed up before us. Then the mosques and minarets of the Orient flashed upon the sunlight—and then a marvellous mirage—a great sheet of water, a vast inland sea; and one could fancy that, rising from its lagoons, Venice in all her brightness, the peerless queen of the Adriatic, dawned upon our vision. At last we entered the great mountain range, and the contrast between the vast prairie ocean and the vast sea of mountains was so great that we are lost in wonder and awe. That mountain rampart it appeared impossible for humanity to scale or conquer. Involuntarily the words of the Second Spirit in “*Manfred*” sprang to our lips. The mountains were so gigantic and colossal, the human beings threading their recesses so weak, puny and small, we could not but imagine the genius of the place addressing us in the words of the famous invocation:

“Mont Blanc is the monarch of mountains;
We crowned him long ago
On a throne of rocks, in a robe of clouds,
With a diadem of snow.

Around his waist are forests braced,
The avalanche in his hand;
But ere it falls, that thundering ball
Must pause at my command.

The glacier's cold and restless mass
Moves onward day by day;
But I am he who bids it pass,
Or with its ice delay.

I am the spirit of the place,
Could make the mountains bow
And quiver to their cavern'd base—
And what with me would'st thou?”

Heine tells us, that once when he was in the mountains of Jura, he was so impressed with the awful sublimity and grandeur of the scene that he forgot he had been the arch mocker and scoffer, and skeptic of his age; that he had laughed at and scorned everything that men and women held in reverence and honor; that he had tarampled every system of human belief under his feet; that he had subjected everything divine to his scathing analysis and merciless criticism, but when a little child came to him with her catechism in her hand and said, “Sir, what do you believe in?” He bowed his head reverently and replied, in the words of the grand formula of the Christian faith:

“I believe in God, the Father Almighty, maker of heaven and earth.”

I think that every one must experience this feeling who enters those mountain solitudes, and of necessity must look from the finite up to the infinite. On we speed through mountain passes and defiles, the Devil's Head and many a castellated crag looking down on us with grim defiance, until, sweeping by Silver City and many a mountain hamlet, we reach the line which separates the great North-West from British Columbia. Then we give three cheers for the Pacific Province; and some of us thought sadly of the kindly, able and genial gentlemen who came to us from their far off western homes, who won all hearts by their kindness, frankness, and manliness; who always defended so bravely the rights of their magnificent Province, and who, alas, too many of them, sleep the sleep that knows no waking. At last we reach the summit. It was in the dusk of the evening, “amid the gloaming and the mirk,” that we descended into the valley of the shadow of the great Columbian pass. Here the scenery was superbly grand. Above us towered the hoary and snow capped head of Mount Stephen; far, far below us was the great canyon at the bottom of which the silver thread of the river went on its flashing and dashing way to the ocean. The mountain sides were covered with shrubbery and timber, and as the shadows flitted to and fro, with every passing moment we had a change of scene. We were moving slowly along the mountain side on the verge of the dread abyss, drinking in at every pause the awful grandeur and sublimity of the scene, a whisper reached us: “Have you any dear friend in Canada you would like to see again; for if a bolt should break, or a wheel give way, your journey will be a short one.” We replied there were many in Canada whose hands we would like to clasp once more, but that to some extent we were fatalists, and quoted the old Moslem proverb:

“On two days it steads not to run from your grave:
The appointed and the unappointed day.
On the first, neither balm nor physician can save;
Nor thee on the second, the universe slay.”

We also quoted the more cheerful philosophy of the Boston transcendentalist who, when a horse ran away, said that she trusted in Providence until the breeching broke, then matters became mixed and she lost confidence in things generally. We said that the Saskatchewan had so far borne us faithfully and well, and we trusted her good conduct would continue to the end. The fact that she was constructed for the directors and not for the commonalty, did not diminish our confidence in her, and if she should go back upon her record; if, at an imprudent moment, she should kick over the traces; if a coupling bolt should