

CHAPTER V.

FRITZ finished his piece of fall ploughing on Wednesday night. On Thursday morning he thought he would give his riding mare a bit of a spell galloping over the prairie.

The faithful animal whinnied as he went towards her stall, and playfully feigned to bite as he tightened the saddle-girths. Springing on her back, he was soon going at a fine pace over the springy ground. Far into the blue distance stretched the apparently limitless expanse, while to the south rose up the canopy of murky smoke that indicated the location of the city.

But the smoke was not so dense as usual. The strike, which had spread to many industries, had made many a factory chimney smokeless. The last to join in the contest of labor against capital were the hundreds of workmen employed by Mr. Vernon, who was the wealthiest contractor in the city. He was very firm in his determination to resist the demands of the men, who had taken advantage of a boom in the city to ask for an increase of pay.

Sweeping the horizon citywards with his eye, Fritz perceived a moving black dot. Soon he