

the deep narrow trails of the buffalo, and the saucer-like hollows where the shaggy monsters used to wallow; and strewing the plain in all directions are the whitened skulls of these noble animals, now so nearly extinct. There are farms around many of the little stations even so far west as this, and the herds of cattle grazing on the knolls indicate the "ranch country"; and here Nature seems to have atoned in part for the scarcity of timber by providing beneath the surface a reservoir of natural gas, which has been tapped at some of the stations and made to afford power for pumping water, and light and heat for the station houses, and which will soon be utilized in reducing the silver ores from the mountains not far away.

As we approach Crowfoot Station, all are alive for the first view of the Rocky Mountains, yet more than a hundred miles away; and soon we see them—a glorious line of snowy peaks, rising straight from the plain, and extending the whole length of the western horizon, seemingly an impenetrable barrier. As we speed on, peak rises behind peak, then dark bands of forest that reach up to the snow-line come into view; the snow-fields and glaciers glisten in the sunlight, and over the rolling tops of the foot-hills the passes are seen, cleft deep into the heart of the mountains. We are now in the country of the once dreaded Blackfeet, the most handsome and warlike of all the Indian tribes, but now peacefully settled on a reservation near by. We have been running parallel to the tree-lined banks of the Bow River, and now, crossing its crystal waters, we find ourselves on a beautiful hill-girt plateau, in the centre of which stands the new city of Calgary, at the base of the Rocky Mountains, two thousand two hundred and sixty-two miles from Montreal and three thousand four hundred and sixteen feet above the ocean.

Before us, and on either side, the mountains rise in varied forms and in endless change of aspect, as the lights and shadows play upon them. Behind us is the great sea of open prairie. Northward is the wooded district of Edmonton and the North Saskatchewan, full of moose, elk, bear, and all manner of fur-bearing animals and winged game. Stretching away one hundred and fifty miles to the United States boundary southward, and indefinitely northward, is the Ranch Country; and railways extend through this from Calgary to Edmonton at the north and to McLeod at the south.

You may be sure of a cordial welcome should you visit the ranchmen, and it will be worth your while to do so. You will find them all along the foot-hills, their countless herds feeding far out on the plain. Cattle and horses graze at will all over the country, summer and winter alike. The warm "Chinook" winds from across the mountains keep the ground free from snow in the winter, except for a day or two at a time, and the nutritious and naturally cured grasses are always within reach of the cattle. In the spring and autumn all the ranchmen join in a "round up" to collect and sort out the animals according to the brands of the different owners, and then the "cow-boy" appears in all his glory. To see these splendid riders "cutting out" or separating the animals from the common herd, lassoing and throwing them, that they may be branded with the owner's mark, or herding a band of free-born and unbroken horses, is well worth coming all this way. The ranchmen, fine fellows from the best families in the East and in England,