

"Since Sam Barr and his wife took her—  
from—the reservation."

"Good God! It's true, then!"

"Yes. I induced Nelson to educate her."

"I am not sure that you were kind."

"Neither am I. But I couldn't look ahead  
and see all of this."

"Her mother?"

"Died when Tess was born, died in the hut  
of one of the under-chiefs. Nelson married  
a year afterward."

Layton made no reply, and the conversation  
was but fitful and disconnected during the re-  
mainder of the drive. Now and then from  
some hill-top Seb could look across the miles  
and see Steptoe Butte, the sentinel of the Pa-  
louse, and he realized more and more that he  
was back in her country, among her hills, view-  
ing the scenes she had known from childhood.  
Then they topped another small plateau and his  
hands gripped the side of the seat, for close  
at hand was the West home, and in the yard  
was Tess. He knew that it was she at the first  
swift glance.

As they drew up at the gate the girl came  
running to meet them, and as Layton sprang to  
the ground and raised his hat, a spot of red