



LAKE AGNES, NEAR LAFFAN.

brushwood. There are few dwellings, so few that when one is seen, passengers run to the car windows and exclaim, "There's a house!" as sailors exclaim at sight of a ship on the desert ocean. The half dozen "towns" along the line look as though they had been set out the night before—as in fact some of them have been; for the railroad has only been completed two years, and the oldest town dates since the operation of the road. At one place, where most of the "houses" were white tents set up to shelter immigrants just arrived, a pretty girl in the latest New York style, with a ravishing bonnet and dainty lace-trimmed parasol, was on the station platform to greet us. The sight of a rose blooming in the Sahara desert would be no more surprising than the unexpected sight of that girl with the Fifth avenue raiment in that tent town in the Northwest Territory.

The rough life which inevitably removes the outward signs of civilization, may in time even affect one's inner nature; we observed, however, that the depot loungers on this road in Alberta were composed

of a class seldom seen loafing around railway stations in other countries. This for two reasons: there being but two trains a week, when one passes, the entire population turns out to witness the phenomenon. The second reason is that a large per cent. of the settlers are educated Englishmen, younger sons, who, not having money enough to maintain the dignity of their station in England, come to this country, homestead three hundred and twenty acres of land, and lead a life that is rough but independent, and infinitely more agreeable to the average Englishman, imbued with a passion for owning land, than would be a life of work, no matter if light and lucrative, in London. Once, in a rude frontier town, hearing the sweet strain of Mendelssohn's "Spring Song" in the hotel parlor adjoining my room, I tipped softly in, expecting to see at the piano a woman with small, white hands; instead, there sat a man booted and spurred, in a blue flannel shirt, around his waist a belt holding two revolvers, on his head a cowboy hat with a leather thong extending down and tied under the