

at the prairie creek. Charles Kirwan the Rancher turned and touched his companion with the rein to awaken him from his reverie.

He started; had he been day-dreaming only a few minutes?

"Well, old fellow, what do you think of this country, eh?"

It was a middle-aged man, perhaps thirty-five, who spoke, a pleasant ring his voice had then, and the sunlight shimmered over his dark beard and his well-cut features, lightening the dark hair showing under the Rancher's cap.

The Rancher's guest was in no dreamland—all was reality—but such a pleasant reality that afternoon in the hazy Indian summer.

They had skirted along one side of the prairie, and were about to cross the creek ("crick," the settlers called it). These creeks are small streams of water running through the prairies, and on the banks of such streams a belt of trees is always to be found. They had penetrated into one of these belts of trees, and were by the side of the stream, about to cross over.

Woodhouse, sitting on the side of the waggon, with his eyes turned to the prairies, had not perceived this until his friend spoke, and it is at this entrance to the prairie life I present to my readers Charles Kirwan, a self-made man.

I don't know if you would call him handsome. He had a winning smile on his lips, and his expression