



RED RIVER GUIDE.

ed none of its virtue to the ravishing hot water, and the decoction which we poured into our tin cups from the new tin tea-pot deserved no better name than hot slops. We asked for bread and received a stone, or at least something so compact, solid, and yet springy, that if it could be produced in sufficient quantities it might supersede the pavements of New York, with danger to horses, profit to the contractor, and addition to the general filth—the three essentials. Fried salt pork was the *pièce de resistance*.

These were our bad beginnings, however. We had not then got into the region of game. Subsequently we had bread as light and good as could be desired, and banqueted on flesh, fish, and fowl of an infinite variety. Even Delmonico denies you the pleasure which we had—of

shooting your own bird, picking, dressing, and salting it, and impaling the cadaver upon a sharp stick, there to broil over the coals of the camp-fire into exquisite yellows and browns. And a venison steak with the costliest accompaniments, in a four-walled restaurant, is not to be preferred to a buffalo steak at supper, bought by a four-mile chase. Nor did bread and pork and tea comprise all our bill of fare. Some of the nomads whom civilization was sloughing off still clung to the fare to which they had been accustomed; and visitors came, bringing in secret pockets mysterious black bottles, containing, if all we have heard is true, chalk, marble dust, opium, tobacco, henbane, oil of vitriol, copperas, alum, strychnine, and other exhilarating beverages.