

The Mountain Divide

railing into a freight office and a ticket and telegraph office.

It could be seen, as the two men paused at the door of the inner room, that the first wore a military fatigue-cap, and his alert carriage as he threw open his cape-coat indicated the bearing of an American army officer. He was of medium height, and his features and eyes implied that the storms and winds of the plains and mountains were familiar friends. This was Park Stanley, charged at that time with the construction of the first trans-continental railroad.

The agent's office, which he and his companion now looked into, was half-filled with a crowd of frontiersmen, smoking, talking, disputing, asking questions, and crowding against the fence that railed off the private end of the room; while at the operator's table next to the platform window a tall, spindling boy was trying in the confusion behind him to get a message off the wire.

Stanley, eying the lad, noticed how thin his face was and what a bony frame spread out under the roundabout jacket that he appeared already