

# ALBERTA AND THE OTHERS

## CHAPTER I

### A WESTERN HEIRESS

"You *won't* like it, Alberta," said the Captain.

He stood on the shabby hearth-rug, with his back to a bright wood fire that was not out of place even on a May afternoon, and looked regretfully about him at the homely, rather untidy little room, with its familiar air of being lived in every day by a varied assortment of young and energetic people.

The tea-things had not been cleared away, and more than one saucer contained cigarette-ashes. Out of a half-closed drawer dangled the feet of several stockings; a printing-frame was balanced in the window to catch the last of the day; and books and papers had overflowed the table-tops and encroached on the seats of chairs.

In all this cheerful disorder signs of a neat and methodical spirit were not lacking, as evidenced by a smoker's cabinet quite full of sewing materials, and