

"I'll try and teach yer to like it ; but yer not broke in yet, that's sure."

From that time Tom and Woodhouse were fast friends.

Whilst this scene was going on Woodhouse had caught a glimpse of the inside of the ranche.

As Charley said, there it was—the rough floor, the stone hearth, on which a wood fire was blazing : an American cooking stove standing out in the room, a table covered with oilcloth, the shelves for grocery and plates, a lamp, and a few rough chairs. In one corner a ladder leading up to the loft. All this shut in 20 feet by 15 feet.

The bed-room, the lean-to. Woodhouse noticed the two-inch chinks where it joined on to the building proper. A rough bedstead indeed there ; the wood composing it not even planed by the maker ; the tin wash-basin, the four-inch looking-glass, all perfectly as Charley had said.

This was to be his home for some months, and what events those months shut in ! as dissolving views, the chapters of this volume will pass before you.

Happy days, streaked with sunshine and quietude, over-ridden oftentimes by the grim shadow of pain and death ; yet days he thanked Providence for, and whose memory he loved in after years.

In the meanwhile Jack, another ranche boy, had prepared the evening meal, and they sat down to pork chops, prairie chicken, corn bread, stewed peaches and coffee, as soon as they entered.