

THE MOUNTAIN DIVIDE

CHAPTER I

NIGHT had fallen and a warm rain drifting down from the mountains hung in a mist over the railroad yards and obscured the lights of Medicine Bend. Two men dismounting from their drooping horses at the foot of Front Street threw the reins to a man in waiting and made their way on foot across the muddy square to the building which served the new railroad as a station and as division head-quarters. In Medicine Bend, the town, the railroad, everything was new; and the broad, low pine building which they entered had not yet been painted.

The public waiting-room was large, roughly framed, and lighted with hanging kerosene lamps. Within the room a door communicated with the agent's office, and this was divided by a wooden