

A Speech

They were a happy group at luncheon there. Even the taciturn Brand Williams had been persuaded to come. His native picturesqueness was rather effaced by a black, characterless suit of "store clothes."

Walter Stone, at the conclusion of the luncheon, asked Overland to make a speech. Nothing daunted, Overland rose briskly.

"I expect you're lookin' for me to fall off the roof of the cannery into the tomato-vat and make a large red splash. Not me. I got somethin' to say. Now the difference in droppin' a egg on the kitchen floor and breakin' it calm-like, in a saucer, ain't only the muss on the floor. You save the egg. Just recent I come nigh to losin' my whole basket. You all know who saved 'em. Not namin' any names, the same person, by jest bein' herself, and kind to everybody, put me wise to the fact that money and clothes ain't all that goes to make a man. And, at the same time, speakin' kind of orthodoxical, money and clothes has a whole lot to do with makin' a man. I just got hep to that idea recent.

"Speakin' of clothes leads me to remark that I got a new outfit up at the bunk-house. It's a automobilein' outfit. Billy says it's the correc' thing. He helped me pick it out. Which leads Billy into this here thing, too. He said to break the news gentle, and not scare anybody to death