

Casting a farewell look upon the forest-rimmed lake, we follow up the course of Clarke's fork, cross the Montana line and plunge into the great CŒUR D'ALENE CANYON.

For the next twenty miles the scenery is sublime, awakening mingled sensations of delight and awe. We creep over high trestles and bridges, rush through deep cuts, gaze up to towering cliffs and down into deep gorges, see the pines bending to the breeze far above us, and hear the subdued roar of torrents well up from the cavernous depths below. On our right rise the Cœur d'Alene mountains, while on the left the great Cabinet range is piled up to form the dividing ridge between Clarke's fork and the erratic Kootenai. Yet these mountains were not created simply to awe mankind into reverence by their sublimity nor to enchant him with lovely pictures. Ledges of mineral, marble and granite are awaiting development, and from the lowest level to the highest ridge is one almost unbroken forest, from which lumber can be supplied to the country on all sides for years to come. A competent judge has estimated that one-quarter of this is white pine and the remainder yellow pine, fir, cedar, tamarack and hemlock, in about equal proportions. The whir of the saw and the ringing echo of the axe already resound in the mountains, and the forest monarchs that have withstood the blasts of ages are bowing before the inevitable.

Still continuing up Clarke's fork, we emerge from the canyon, pass Cabinet Landing and Thompson river, and gradually approach a more open country, with mountains and hills less stupendous and crowned with a lighter growth of trees. At Horse Plains we find a valley on the border of the great Flathead region and but a few miles from the reservation. Away to the northwest is the celebrated

#### FLATHEAD LAKE,

and above it is a magnificent country, fertile and well watered, which is just beginning to attract the attention of settlers. Now that the railroad approaches within sixty miles and renders it of easy access to immigrants, it will no doubt fill up rapidly. The lake is thirty miles long and dotted with beautiful islands.

#### HORSE PLAINS

is favorably located as a general starting point and supply station for the whole upper Flathead river country, and quite a business town may spring up here. But we can not pause to canvass future prospects, for we are already over the line of the Flathead reservation and rapidly crossing it in a southeasterly course. Leaving to the left the St. Ignatius mission, a successor of the one established long years ago by the zealous Catholic missionaries, and passing the Jocko agency, we gradually approach the southern line of the reservation and cross once more upon the public domain. We are soon engulfed between the walls of O'Keefe canyon, and creep cautiously over the gigantic trestle that bridges

#### MARENT GULCH.

This trestle is extremely high, and illustrates how science and engineering skill can overcome natural barriers that a few years ago were considered unconquerable obstacles to railroad building. It is 868 feet long, 84 feet wide at the base, and at one point the top is 226 feet above the rocky foundation upon which the timbers rest. The sensation as we gaze into the yawning abyss

over which we hang on such a slender thread, is one of utter helplessness and entire reliance for safety upon the skill of others. In times like this how insignificant is the man who believes that no one can be trusted! In the bridge, the engine and the cars are represented the hands and brains of ten thousand men, and did one of these fail in his duty we might be plunged headlong upon the jagged rocks below. How these thoughts crowd upon us as we are suspended in mid air, and how we sigh with relief as we see solid ground beneath the wheels once more!

The next point of importance is

#### MISSOULA,

just beyond the junction of the Bitter Root and Hellgate rivers. It is a thriving city of fifteen hundred inhabitants. For years it has been the trade center of Western Montana, and will continue so to be, and keep pace in its growth with the development of the country. In its vicinity are large tracts of excellent farming land, especially the famous Bitter Root valley. All crops are irrigated by little ditches running from the numerous streams, and a failure is thus rendered impossible. A branch railroad extending up the valley from Missoula will no doubt soon be constructed. Fort Missoula, a U. S. military post, is a few miles west of the city. Many promising mines are located still farther west in the Bitter Root mountains, a continuation of the Cœur d'Alene range.

#### HELLGATE RIVER.

Leaving Missoula behind us we take an easterly course, still following up the Clarke's fork, here known as Hellgate river. In the next hundred miles we cross twelve Howe truss bridges, ten of them spanning the Hellgate, one the Big Blackfoot and one Gold creek. We are now ascending the main ridge of the Rocky mountains, and are forced to jump from one bank to the other to maintain an even grade. The scenery absorbs our entire attention, and we never weary of gazing at the endless variety of gorges, cliffs, peaks, mountain torrents and noble forests. At the mouth of Little Blackfoot the Hellgate turns sharply to the south and is thereafter known as Deer Lodge river. A town named Garrison has been laid out at this point, as the Utah and Northern narrow gauge road from Ogden, passing through Butte City and Deer Lodge, will soon form a junction here with the Northern Pacific.

#### DEER LODGE.

This is one of the oldest mining towns in Montana, and is the county seat of Deer Lodge county. The mountains in which it lies are rich in minerals, and the many little valleys teem with cattle, and are dotted with fine farms. When the narrow gauge road is completed to Little Blackfoot, Deer Lodge will have direct communication with the east by two routes, the Northern Pacific and Union Pacific; also two routes to Portland and one to San Francisco. The cheapening of transportation will do much to aid in developing its wealth of resources, and largely increase its present population of 1,500.

#### BUTTE CITY

lies in Summit valley, 5,700 feet above the level of the sea. For years it was a small mining camp, but since the approach of the Utah & Northern road a few years ago it has grown with wonderful rapidity. It now contains a population of nearly 7,000, and is substantially built of brick, possessing daily papers, telephones, electric

lights, gas, three banks, and all the adjuncts of a metropolis. Surrounding it are gold, silver and copper mines that are being worked on a large scale, with extensive reduction and smelting works. In business enterprise, value of its mineral output, volume of trade, and rapid increase of population, it has nobly earned the title of the "Little Giant of the Northwest."

#### THE ROCKY MOUNTAINS.

We now pass up the valley of the Little Blackfoot and shoot through a tunnel 500 feet in length, rising rapidly towards the summit of the mountains. Names are often irrelevant, but throughout the great west, those bestowed by the early explorers and trappers have generally a peculiar significance. The towering peaks and vast pyramidal heaps of barren rocks, rendered all the more conspicuous by an absence of the dense forests that beautify the Cœur d'Alene range and hide its rocky masses, attest the fact that these, above all others, are the "Rocky Mountains" of the world. Upward we climb until at last the summit is reached and we glide into the long, dark, smoky interior of the

#### MULLAN TUNNEL.

This great hole through the backbone of the mountains is 3,850 feet in length, but as we roll slowly through it and wait for the first faint glimmerings of light, we can hardly convince ourselves that it is not thrice the distance. Though on the main ridge of the Rockies, the pass is so low that we are but 5,548 feet above sea level, and seventeen feet lower than Bozeman tunnel. We now glide rapidly down the mountains, pass through a short tunnel on the Mullan grade, and in fifteen miles reach the city of

#### HELENA,

situated at the base of the mountains in the edge of the beautiful little valley of the Prickly Pear, a small tributary of the Missouri. This is the "Queen City of the Mountains," the seat of government of the territory, county seat of Lewis and Clarke county, and the commercial and financial center of Montana. It is a thriving city of 7,000 inhabitants, having an extensive wholesale and retail trade, large mining and stock interests, two daily papers and four national banks. Everything suggests enterprise and prosperity, and the mining industry, which has been supreme for twenty years, is rapidly developing to greater proportions under the advantages offered by the railroad. The scenery of the

#### PRICKLY PEAR

is grand in the extreme. It cuts through a spur of the mountains for a distance of thirteen miles. The walls of the narrow gorge rise in places to a vertical height of 1,000 feet, and along them the stage road has been cut in the solid rock.

Thirty miles from Helena we reach the Missouri river, up whose banks we go in a southerly direction till we come to the

#### MEETING OF THE WATERS,

the point where the Jefferson, Madison and Galatin rivers unite to form the mighty Missouri. From here, the initial point of that great stream, a chip cast upon its bosom is borne through dark canyons, over falls and rapids, is beaten under the wheels of steamers, passes cities, towns and villages almost without number, until, having traveled more than 4,000 miles, it floats out upon the broad expanse of the Gulf of Mexico and is lost forever.