

seen the falls; what one can do any time is scarcely ever done."

So it was settled. Hal replied to Miss Linton's letter, stating that he intended going over to Butte in a few weeks, and would try to get some news of her sister. Then followed a month of hard work. Haying is a "brow-sweating," business for the farmer, but there is a charm and picturesqueness about it, fascinating to the quiet looker-on, and not wholly lost on the workman. The fragrance of the new-mown hay is almost intoxicating, and the pleasure of seeing little colonies of stacks, growing, counteracts all fatigue. Besides, hay-making in the West is almost entirely free from the disagreeable part of it, as known in the East. There are no days of overpowering heat, when a sense of suffocation makes one almost crazy. There is no anxiety about rain coming to spoil the broad swaths and open stacks. The western ranchman works beneath a cloudless sky, in bright sunshine, with sweet, fresh mountain breezes tempering the heat. Not worrying about possible damage by rain or heavy dews, he works more leisurely, and enjoys, to the full, the beauty and fragrance of the year. Hal thought he never so enjoyed a month of work, and when the huge stacks of green hay—peculiar to the West—were finished, the sigh of relief was half of regret. He did not forget his promise to the waiting sister, in the green hills of Vermont, but made his arrangements to go very soon, "on business," as he informed Jim and Mike. And so, Mrs. Thornton was not much surprised when Hal came home one night and said—

"I am going to Butte to-morrow."

When Laura was left alone in her room that dreadful night in March, she lay quietly in bed until assured that her mother and sister were asleep, then she arose and commenced making prepara-

tions for a journey. She had decided she must, and would, go west.

Hugh was alone in the world. There was no one but herself to care what became of him, and she would prove herself "all the world to him." She was weak and dizzy, and moved unsteadily around the room in her task of dressing and packing her valise.

She took with her two or three changes of linen, a wrapper and one good suit besides her gray cloth traveling dress. She took a few of her best collars, handkerchiefs, etc., all her money and small stock of jewelry, which was all valuable. At 2:00 o'clock she was ready, and taking her valise in one hand and her shoes in the other, she noiselessly descended the stairs, and gained the kitchen undiscovered. She took a little cold chicken and some bread and butter she found in the pantry, and quietly let herself out into the clear, cool night.

By this time it was 2:30. She knew the stage would start in an hour. She walked to the end of the lane, and putting down her valise, paced steadily back and forth to keep warm. Her thoughts were busy and the hour passed quickly, even to her impatience. When she heard the stage rumble up from the stable to the hotel, she walked quickly over and took a seat in it, unobserved. She was the only passenger for the first ten miles, and the driver did not know she was there until he opened the door to admit a man and boy.

He was surprised, but when failing to produce a ticket, she paid him in cash, from an apparently well-filled purse, he considerably forbore questioning her.

They reached the railway station at about 8:00 a. m., and Laura bought a ticket, not for New York, but for Montpelier, where she had in bank a few hundred dollars left her by an aunt.

On arriving at her destination she took a cab and drove to the bank. She