

A TOUCH OF HIGH LIFE

(Written for THE COURIER.)

I say high life because we were camped at Ragtown; and Ragtown, nestled up close to the backbone of Terry's Peak, is the highest mining camp in the Black Hills. Our camp, with its equipment of hobos and implements of construction, was the long expected track-laying outfit on the Spearfish extension. The road-bed was so nearly completed that the contractors would be able to keep out of the way, and so the track machine had been ordered out and we were busy putting down ties and rails at the rate of three-quarters of a mile every day. In coming seven miles from the junction at Englewood the track climbs nearly fifteen hundred feet and from the summit crest just beyond Ragtown it drops over four thousand feet before it swings into Spearfish, twenty-four miles away. There is a big rock tilted up on edge just at the crown tip of the hill where two or three of us used to go and sit for an hour or more after supper almost every night, watching the curious atmospheric effects and absorbing the quiet beauty of the landscape.

The hills are so complete in themselves, so perfect in grandeur and beauty that they fairly rival Rocky Mountain scenery. It is a wonderful region. It is magnificent in desolate grandeur and wild simplicity. In detail it is gorgeous in rocks and mosses and trees and endless varieties of flowers. What adds to the wildness and disorder is the formation of the hills themselves. They are not like mountains, where the ridges and chains and systems give an idea of order and principle. On the contrary, one of the most conspicuous and pleasing features of the scenery is the entire lack of principle in relative forms and positions. Any particular hill instead of being one in a regular series, is simply one of a hundred elevations of various heights scattered about much as the pine trees are scattered over the rocky hillsides. The atmosphere is thin and transparent. One seems to see clear across this world and into the next. Away in front the hills rise one after another for ten or fifteen miles and beyond them the prairie runs away to the horizon where earth and sky seem to "pass into nothingness." A good view of rolling prairie from a mountain-top is peculiarly fascinating. The idea of immensity is so much more impressive in looking down than in looking up. The outlines are clear and distinct. The smaller crests peep out from between the peaks, sometimes tinted blue by the birch and quaking-asp, sometimes bare or variegated with monster rocks. The gulches seem like bottomless pits, so black are the pines and shadows. Off to the left the high timbered bluffs above Spearfish Canon shut out a further view, but in front, looking northwest and north, the hills shrink gradually into knolls. The timber thins out and disappears, and after that the gentle roll of the prairie is unbroken as far as the eye can see. The coloring is strong. Many of the hills are literally black. Others, where the trees are not so thick, are brightened here and there by a patch of grass or of rocks or of silver spruce; and always there is the gay blossoming undergrowth beneath the pines. Further away the shades are lighter and softer; the gray prairie is streaked faintly with water-courses or ridges of low bluffs, and continually changed by the fantastic cloud shadows. Beyond the prairie where it joins the sky everything is a soft blur of white, which, coming back to the zenith,

changes gradually into the brighter, clearer colors overhead. The effect is powerful. The picture is a living and a moving one. It is as strong and as personal as a beautiful sermon, and the feeling of reverence is uppermost. There it all lies open like a book, with infinite power in the hills and rocks; infinite beauty in the pines and mosses and graceful curves and outlines; infinite love in the warm coloring and blending of everything into one great harmony. I used to wish that all the pessimists and all the infidels in the world might be herded together and driven to that Ragtown summit. Two hours on top of that tilted rock just before sunset would, I am sure, induce moral expansion.

It was into such a region as this that the practical, pre-eminently material railroad came, bringing with it as a matter of course its bustling contractors, its constructing engineers, who alone save the invasion from being utterly sacrilegious; and its hobos, who by way of contrast add strikingly to the picturesqueness of the scene. It is decidedly jarring on one's finer feelings to look at the landscape and then at one of these men and to think they are but different parts of the same Nature; merely different manifestations of the same force; to find, instead of intelligent beings a little lower than the angels, as one feels they should be to match the surroundings, these degraded, worthless creatures, a trifle higher than the brutes.

Once in a while there is a hobo in the crowd who realizes the contrast between the perfection and purity and inspiration of that landscape and his own fallen condition. It is hardly a wonder that the thought of it drives him to drink. I was lounging under a tree on the hillside one Sunday morning reading a yellow-backed novel borrowed from one of the men, when one of the front spikers, whom we knew as "Slim," came sauntering along to where I lay. I knew that Slim could drive a spike better than any man in camp and I knew he could drink more whiskey than any of his fellows, but I had supposed this was the limit alike of his acquirements and aspirations. He was a quiet almost a gentlemanly sort of a hobo—one of the sort who plods along at hard labor for a month for the sole purpose of earning enough wages to provide a first-class spree of five or six days' duration. He seemed thoughtful and pre-occupied as he walked along and I thought I detected all the signs of a coming spree.

"Hullo, Slim," I said, "haven't you been working pretty near three weeks?"

"Only two," and he eyed me suspiciously.

"Shan't I mark you off for about three days beginning with tomorrow morning? Haven't you got some business in Deadwood? Aren't you tired?"

"Oh, the devil carry you, timekeeper, there's not a soberer man in the camp than meself. I've just come out to take a look about is all. I like lookin' at the sceneries there is around here, only I can't stand it very good to get lookin' at them and thinkin' about meself."

I thought I had experienced something like the same state of mind and I kept still. He sat down and "took a look about" for half an hour.

"I'll slip into Deadwood," he said at last, "and get me a bit of a new pipe and be back before the whistle blows in the mornin'."

He looked a trifle sheepish. The pipe was a poor excuse, but it was worse than useless to try to keep the man in camp.

"Better get back by about Thursday, Slim, for the woods are full of good men looking for your job."

"I'll be back by six in the mornin',

timekeeper; but if I ain't, let the first man as can spike take me job for I'd just as soon stay down in the gulch a while where you can't see clear across the country and then get thinkin' about yerself."

Slim had a clear call and in less than half an hour I could see him way down at the bottom of Nevada Gulch striding along toward Deadwood, walking like a man impelled by a mighty purpose.

We laid track just a week without h'm. When he came back the end of the line was way beyond the summit at Ragtown and Slim seemed perfectly content.

T. E. WING.

Canon City coal at the Whitebreast Coal and Lime Co.

First publication Sept. 7.
NOTICE OF INCORPORATION
 Pursuant to the provisions of the Statutes of Nebraska, notice is hereby given and published of the formation of a corporation.

1. The name of said corporation is the "COURIER PRINTING AND PUBLISHING COMPANY."

2. The principal place of transacting the business of said corporation is in the City of Lincoln, Nebraska.

3. The business to be transacted by said corporation is the printing, publishing, circulating and maintaining a newspaper or newspapers, the carrying on of the business of printing, the erection and mansing of suchint buildings, structure, machinery and appliances as may be necessary for transacting such newspaper and printing business and the purchase, ownership or leasing of the necessary real estate to be used in conducting and transacting said business.

4. The amount of the capital stock of said corporation is \$5,000, which shall be paid in full at the date of its issue.

5. Said corporation shall commence on the 15th day of August 1895, and continue 100 years.

6. The affairs of said corporation shall be conducted by its officers consisting of a president, secretary and treasurer. There shall be a board of directors consisting of three stockholders.

Dated this 5th Sept. 1895.

COURIER PRINTING AND PUBLISHING COMPANY
 Sarah B. Harris, W. Morton Smith,
 Secretary. President.
 [SEAL.]
 Sept. 28.

First publication Aug 24

SHERIFF SALE.

Notice is hereby given that by virtue of an order of sale issued by the clerk of the district court of the third judicial district of Nebraska, within and for Lancaster county, in an action wherein Charles W. Oakes is plaintiff, and Kittie Melick et al are defendants, I will, at 2 o'clock p. m. on the 24th day of September A. D. 1895, at the east door of the court house in the city of Lincoln, Lancaster county, Nebraska, offer for sale at public auction the following described real estate to-wit:
 Lot number eleven (11) in block seventeen (17) in Kinney's "O" street addition to the City of Lincoln, Lancaster county, Nebraska.

Given under my hand this 21st day of August A. D. 1895.

Fred A. Miller,
 Sheriff

Sept 21.

First publication Aug 24.

SHERIFF SALE.

Notice is hereby given that by virtue of an order of sale issued by the clerk of the district court of the third judicial district of Nebraska, within and for Lancaster county, in an action wherein Charles W. Oakes is plaintiff and Joseph W. Winger et al are defendants I will, at 2 o'clock p. m., on the 24th day of September, A. D. 1895, at the east door of the court house, in the city of Lincoln, Lancaster county, Nebraska, offer for sale at public auction the following described real estate to wit:
 Lots number two [2] and seventeen [17] in Orr Sang's subdivision of a part of the southeast quarter [S. E. ¼] of section twenty-five [25] township ten [10] range six [6] east of the 6th principal meridian, in Lincoln, Lancaster county, Nebraska.

Given under my hand this 21st day of August A. D. 1895.

Fred A. Miller,
 Sheriff.

Sept 21

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