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### DAYS IN BEAVER CANON.

BY FLORA BULLOCK,  
For The Courier

A friend of mine who makes a business of going camping every summer with a giddy party of middle-aged young folks, says it is not a good plan to visit the same region of the country twice. He did not say why, but I, knowing that it took tons of trout to satisfy the appetite and story-telling penchant of the party, thought the pleasant spot that had once endured their depredations might feel like the gentleman from Iowa who said of another person in that state: "It is an outrage for the railroads to haul that man twice to the same place."

New scenes have always the added charm that curiosity gives. And if one is feeling ready for strenuous enjoyment, mountain-climbing, bear-hunting and trout-fishing, let him by all means seek some new corner of this wonderland. But when you flee in weariness of bones and spirit, without gun or fish-hook, devoid of malice or appetite, gasping for a breath of cool air, the great boon of restfulness is gained if you are set down at your journey's end in a spot you know and love. There are old pictures of which the eyes never weary, and songs that carry everlasting balm and healing. I could hardly have borne the long hours of lagging through dreary sandhills and glaring cactus waste had I not known that when evening came I should find coolness and quietude, a soft bed and a chance for a bath, in a valley surmounted by hills whose very outline was pictured in my memory.

It is only two years since last I stood enclosed by this high horizon, but in two years one suffers so much through change that it is comforting to find some of the things that remain. Again I may see the unforgotten hills east and west and north and south, the same rocky ledges, the red stratas, the bare slopes, the deeps of dark pine, the rock-walled gorge, every dip and rise of the battlements that guard sunrise and sunset unchanged. I lie in the hammock and gaze, without a twinge of the nerve of curiosity, without a hankering to explore. For I have climbed old Limestone once, and stood on that knob close by the five pines in a row; the Canon Beautiful is no mystery to me, for I have panted up its slippery slopes and slid gasping down again. So the blessing to sit still and meditate on bygone exertions is attained. Until you have secured this you will never know how utterly lazy it is possible for you to become.

The wise Mr. Bok, who instructs all femininity as to their sins of commission and omission, and relieves their distress on doubtful matters when they say their prayers to him, occasionally utters the very proper thing.—I imagine his wife puts it into his head. He exhorts the sisters, when they go away for the summer, not to take the children to much-lauded summer resorts, great hotels and watering places. He speaks of the beauties of farm life in the summer, of the joy of living near Nature. I am glad to find that so wise a notable agrees with me. For, bless you, I knew the truth of what he says years ago when I went barefoot and wore a pink sunbonnet. "Relax and be happy. Drowse and be content. Be yourself, and see how good it is." Yes, and to put it plainly, get away from the racket and

roar, escape from your friends and the necessity of being entertaining, be freed from the necessity of dressing up. A youthful Nebraska poet has written an ode or sonnet to his "old brown pipe" as a bringer of comfort. It would not hold a comparison, I know, to my old brown wrapper, though that is not yet memorialized in verse. It is so delightfully ugly that I should hate to have any town folks embarrassed by beholding me dressed in it.

Consequently, town folks, inasmuch as I and my wrapper are seldom parted, your safe course is plain. The dogs and the chickens, the turkeys and cows and horses, the birds and my few real folks who are my "seeing" companions here, hold the true philosophy of clothes. Comfort, not looks, is the *summum bonum*.

The lady who breakfasted across the table from me in the diner noticed my invalid order and inquired if I were going to Hot Springs. Not I. In the first place, that adjective grated on my sensitive nerves; and then, why go from a place where there are people, to where there are more people, and you have to stay dressed up all day? Go to a farm, a ranch, a tent in the woods, take just yourself, if that is all you have, go to some place that will not arouse you to great exertion, leave books behind you, for, as some one has said, if you can read a book when you are out of doors, there's something wrong with you.—I give you leave to stop reading this right here,—then sleep and grow lazy and fat.

Coolness, you may have difficulty in finding, this season. Everywhere the heat astonished the oldest inhabitant. Ninety-seven degrees on the porch here broke the record. That night, I think, the mercury dropped to fifty-seven. The days are so warm, however, that I have taken to reading Hicks' Almanac for cold comfort. Imagine the effect of this:

"We calculate, also, that these great planets (Jupiter and Saturn), being in the same celestial longitude with Earth, will segregate the solar energy, or warmth, to such an extent that much phenomenally cool weather will result the last half of June and the first half of July."

And here is another crumb:

"As in 1900, so for 1901 we predict that July will be more than ordinarily cool, but that August will bring us into a desert of dryness and heat."

Evenings I take the fieldglass and gaze at the innocent stars whose conjunctions, oppositions, elongations and connivances in general are declared by the Reverend Irl to be the cause of all our woes—whatever they may chance to be, and I am seized with wonder. Beautiful Venus, speeding after the sun down behind the mountain, glorious Luna, Saturn and Jupiter, whose moons I see plainly,—are their comings and goings so baleful or beneficent?

If we have taken the star wise man at his word, however, it might have been better for the pig—and thereby hangs a tale. This is another forecast for July: "Heavy gales, thunder, hail and local downpours of rain may be looked for from 25th to 29th. A general and rapid change to much cooler will take place at this period."

This in spite of the statement that August will be a desert of dryness and heat.

But anyhow here's congratulations to Mr. Hicks. Wednesday, the 25th, was a most wonderful day in the canon. Forty promises of rain loomed, gleaming icebergs, at first, expanded, shot out like a long fan to the zenith, grew thin and passed away. I watched them all day—out of my lazy habits—and wondered that there should be so many clouds and no rain. The sun went down in glory. Against the deep blue of the sky shone

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out every form and shining color that cloud could assume from the grim blue-black line along the east to the silver and snow and jasper, and the crimson and orange overhead and to the west. In a clear blue ground shone the moon above all. You have seen it so. No word of mine can picture, but it may recall. It is not for that I praise any man.

The next day, the 25th, was equally wonderful, because without clouds—at least I saw them not until the storm came—there arrived on schedule time, at noon, the heaviest flood that ever cleared the fences and swept the logs down Beaver creek. This stream is nominally a clear little brook one can jump across. In less than an hour, while the rain fell in "bunches" and there was no time for thunder, the creek became a great copper-colored torrent fifty feet wide, full of great logs, fences, bridges, heavy stones, uprooted gardens. Here it gathered in the big brass kettle down by the wash house, and the week's washing itself went down the boiling waters. Just that morning a "prairie schooner" from Nebraska passed. The pilgrim said he had deserted that God-forsaken land; the green valley here pleased him, and he admired our large garden as the finest he had seen. I shall not tell you what grows or grew there, for it would be cruel to all who live where pea vines are parched. But you should have seen the havoc—at least the sight would have done good the soul of the Reverend Mr. Hicks great good. It was hard to tell the corn from the turnips, or a cabbage from an onion. The fences were gone, only enough left to hold the blackbirds when they came after the waters had sub-

sided and held a caucus over the loaded currant bushes, and the situation in general. Down the creek was still greater destruction; barns, haystacks, fences went with the rush. No one in the canon had ever witnessed such a flood before.

Not to forget the pig,—he and his pen went at the first wave. The good wife mourned him as several dollars lost—but behold, through the downpour, his pigshlp rooting cheerfully on the hill in the pasture. When he came into the yard again he was the cleanest porker I ever saw, with feet like a blush rose; but he was also the meanest. A door he would not go into, and after an hour of chasing he was finally coralled, by dint of a rope caught on his hind hoof and an unceasing prodding. I realized then, as never before, what "pig-headed" means, and I shall hereafter use the term with nice discrimination.

That night the almost full-faced moon and the innocent stars looked down as gently as ever on Beaver creek. I hoped that their baleful or beneficent influence might be felt with somewhat more moderation down in the land I hail from.

M Bar-K Ranch,  
Newcastle, Wyo.

### Another Guess Coming.

In a primary school, the other day, the teacher sought to convey to her pupils an idea of the use of the hyphen. She wrote on the blackboard "Bird's-nest," and, pointing to the hyphen, asked the school, "What is that for?" After a brief pause, a young son of the Emerald Isle piped out, "Please ma'am, for the birds to roost on."—The Mirror.